47-1944

664,066 Negroes In The Armed Forces Of The United States Defend America

WASHINGTON, D. C.—The number of Negroes serving in the Army was 664,066 as of February 29, 1944, an increase of 81,185 over the August 31, 1943 total of 582,861, the War Department reported this week.

There were 77,335 Negroes assigned to the Air Corps and an increase of 593 commissioned officers, the report revealed. (No figures noted) in the six month period, the greatest change occurred in the number of Negroes serving overseas.

A partial breakdown follows:

Infantry	44,002
Coast and Field Artillery	50,955
Cavalry	9,043
Engineers	106,514
Air Forces	77,335
All Others	376,197
Total	664,006*
Commissioned Officers	4,979
Including:	
Dental Corps Officers	77
Nurses	219
Other Medical Corps Officers	467
Chaplains	205
Serving Overseas	284,664*

*The number serving overseas includes officers, warrant officers, nurses, Women's Army Corps, hospital dietitians, physical therapy aides, and enlisted men.

Negroes in French Underground, Film On Paris Reveals

WASHINGTON — (ANP) When one of the local Negro patronized theaters showed the film "Liberation of Paris" credited with being an actual photographing of the action leading to Paris' freedom, audiences cheered wildly when there flashed on the screen a black wounded FFI being led and carried along the streets by two white compatriots. The black Frenchman had been wounded in the street fights.

From this film, it is evident many Negroes are taking part in the underground movement to rid France of the Nazi tyranny although no mention has been made of such heroic action on the part of Negroes by the others.

What Will Happen To Our Pilots?

WASHINGTON — What is going to happen to Negro pilots, mechanics and ground crews of the brilliant 332nd Pursuit Squadron and the 332nd Fighter Group, the Army Air Force units operating in the European Theatre?

Now that the fighting has stopped and men are being released to peace-time occupations, with they pursue their new-found interests in aviation?

We ask these questions because there doesn't seem to be a ready answer. As for the men, well, they are too busy shooting down Nazi planes to even think about their post-war future.

Major air line companies are rapidly drawing their blue prints for a glorious future, and there is no doubt that all their plans include around number of skilled flyers that will be at their disposal. Competition for jobs will be keen, as companies with huge resources will be free to compete for routes to the world's sky-ways.

First Negro Company

Members of the 99th and 332nd when they get around to thinking about it, can rest easy so far as the future in aviation is concerned, according to a recent announcement. Already members of their own race are taking the proper steps to assure them jobs in aviation.

The Union Air Lines was formed in 1943 by William H. Hawkins, who is president and general manager. Mr. Hawkins is a former sergeant in World War One (Co. "B" 350 MG BN. 92nd Div.) a florist by trade, and a promoter of business from New York to Seattle. He conceived the idea of Negroes operating their own airline, while he was composing a strictly GI tune entitled "I Want An Army Jeep for Tokio Streets." The triumphant entry through Tokio streets in an Army jeep is an illusion shared by thousands. The company is awaiting a certificate of convenience and necessity from the Civil Aeronautics Board on a route that has been on file since October of last year. It is proposed to augument the fleet to a size that will permit the company to render the type of service that this route demands. William H. Hawkins sees a great future for Union Air Lines. Mrs. Mary McLeod Bethune, pres[ident] of the National Council of Negro Women, christened the flagship (which bears her name) on November 20.

99th Ace Killed In Action On Italian Battlefront; 6 Missing

New York New York—Amsterdam News

12-16-44

California Pilot, One Of Group's Best Men

(By ART CARTER
(Amsterdam News and Afro-American War Correspondent)

ALLIED HEADQUARTERS—One pilot was dead, another injured, and six were missing in action as fighter groups closed out last month's intermittent aerial activity.

Lt. Roger Romine, of Oakland, Calif., one of the group's leading pilots, was killed in a plane crash on the field. He had two planes to his credit. Flight Officer William L. Hill, of Huntington, West Virginia, was injured in the same accident when planes collided on a runway during a takeoff.

Lt. Cornelius P. Gould, of Pittsburgh, Pa., has been missing in action since a mission over Czechoslovakia. Observing pilots reported that Gould had bailed out after his plane was hit by enemy fire.

Lt. Maceo A. Harris, of Cambridge, Mass., was reported missing in action after engine trouble encountered during a mission over Austria.

Lts. Quitman C. Walker, of Indianola, Miss., and Roger B. Gaiter of Seaside Heights, N. J., failed to return from a strafing mission in the vicinity of Vienna. Captain William J. Faulkner, of Nashville Tenn., was reported missing in action over Hungary.

Lts. Robert C. Chandler, of Allegan, Mich., and Shelby F. Westbrook of Toledo, Ohio, who were reported missing from a fighter group mission over Yugoslavia on October 2, have returned to their base safe and sound thirty days after landing in that country. Their plane was damaged by flak.

Professor Modest Motor, section chief of a squadron of fighter groups, was awarded the Bronze Star for meritorious achievement during the North African, Sicilian and Italian campaigns.

A former farm tractor demonstrator, the popularly known "Prof" was cited for his ingenuity in converting abandoned enemy vehicles and parts into serviceable units, and for his excellent maintenance of the transportation under his supervision.

47a-1944

Davis' P-51 Fighters Down Nine Nazi Planes In Day

Call — Kansas City, Mo.

10-20-44

New York Boy Emerges Hero With 3 ME109's

By ART CARTER
War Correspondent in Europe

ADVANCED ALLIED HEADQUARTERS. — Pressing home thunderous thrusts against the Nazis in wild air battles over western Hungary, the P-51 Mustang group, commanded by Col. Benjamin O. Davis, scored nine air victories and destroyed many more enemy aircraft on the ground in three busy days of operation.

Encountering German planes in the air for the first time since August 24, the group continued its bid in the Allied effort to annihilate the Luftwaffe by blasting six ME 109's and three Heinkel 111's out of the sky, registering the unit's second best bag in the Mediterranean campaign.

Score 11 Victories in Day

Previously, the group had scored 11 victories in a single day, July 18. The determined flyers piled up the new victories Thursday while attacking important ground targets. 10-20-44

In the Budapest-Bratislava area, threatened by the advancing Russian army, in addition to the aerial destruction of Jerry aircraft, the mission showed 15 river barges, three locomotives, three passenger cars, 30 box cars, 40 motor transports and factories badly damaged or destroyed by the strafing attack. Upon reaching the target zone, the Mustangs were challenged by a flight of the long-dormant Luftwaffe, making its first appearance against 15th AAF planes in strength for several weeks.

As the enemy formation rose to attack, violent dogfights broke out, filling the sky with blazing bullets. When the mass smoke from the bullets cleared, 1st Lieut. Lee A. Archer, Jr., 350 West 119th St., New York City, was the battle's individual hero with triple triumphs. 10-20-44

Triple Triumphs

He sent three ME 109's crashing to the earth. Adding one previous victory July 18, Archer now has four to his credit, the same number to the credit of Captains Edward L. Toppins and Joseph D. Ellsberry, all in bid to become the group's first ace. An ace is a pilot who registers five victories.

Captain Wendell O. Pruitt, 23, of St. Louis scored daily double downs, shooting one HE 111, and one ME 109. Other pilots who gained victories in the melee were Captain Milton R. Brooks, 26, Glassport, Pa., one ME 109; 1st Lieut. William W. Greene, Jr., 23, Staunton, Va.; Luther Smith, Jr., 24, Des Moines, both ME 111's; 1st Lieut. Roner O. Mine, Oakland, Cal., one ME 109.

Mine had two previous victories while the others had one earlier triumph with the exception of Captain Brooks who tallied his initial victory. 10-20-44

Brooks declared, "It was a good feeling, Now I am ready for more Jerries."

Lt. Archer said, "It was a busy place. There were all kinds of planes but the Jerries sure knew we were out there today."

All the pilots reported that the Nazis fought with fanatical persistance, pressing the attack all the way though badly beaten in the final analysis.

The airdrome strafed on this mission was Kaposval in Hungary, providing direct support to the Russian army fanning out a strangle-hold around the Hungarian capital of Budapest. The destruction of the HE 111's marked the first time the group's Mustangs have shot down these twin-engined four-seated long-range bombers used extensively by night-raiding Germans.

Field Day for Mustangs

Friday, the 13th, regarded by the superstitious as unlucky, turned out to be a field day for the group, providing close escort cover for the heavy bombers of the 15th AAF attacking the oil refinery of Blechhammer south of eastern Germany. 10-20-44

Fighter Pilot Killed at TAAF

Afro American
Baltimore, Md.

TUSKEGEE, Ala. — Second Lt. Francis B. Peoples, 24, of Henderson, N.C., was killed while making a routine combat training flight in a P-40 fighter plane at the army air field here on April 27.

A former student and athlete at Hampton Institute, Lieutenant Peoples was a member of the latest class of pilots to be graduated from Tuskegee Army Air Field, having been commissioned on April 15. 5-6-44

Lieutenant Peoples was formerly a driver and gunner in the 758th Tank Battalion, Camp Hood, Texas. His wife is the former Miss Lucille C. Jones, 75 W 141st Street, New York City, and his parents reside in Henderson.

CHICAGO ACE DOWNS 3 NAZIS

Defender — Chicago, Ill.
7-29-44

Bagging three Nazi Messerschmidts in a fierce 20-minute battle in the skies over Germany, Lt. Clarence D. Lester of Chicago this week won uncontested honors as America's top-ranking Negro air ace.

The 21-yea-old pilot, who lives at 5329 Prairie Avenue and was a Englewood high school football star, scored his initial victories in a speedy Mustang fighter escorting a formation of Flying Fortresses bombing the Nazi airdrome at Memmingen in Southern Germany.

More than 100 Nazi fighters came out of the sun to attack the raiders. The Negro pilots escorting the Fortresses immediately tangled with the Nazis while the big bombers dropped their loads and escaped. A total of 11 Nazi fighters was downed by the Negro fighter group.

Down Total of 25

With the 14 planes downed earlier by this Negro fighter group, its total of confirmed victories now stands at 25.

Only other fliers to match Lester's record are Capt. Joseph Dubois Elsbury of Langston, Okla., who downed three Nazis in a single battle last week, and Capt. Charles Hall of Brazil, Ind., formerly with the 99th Pursuit Squadron. Hall's bag of three Nazi planes, however, was not accomplished in a single flight.

The 11 planes bagged over Germany followed closely on the heels of the downing of nine Nazis in the week previously.

First Battle

Lester's mother, Mrs. Lillian Lester, was jubilant at the news of her son's accomplishment for it climaxed his dream since the age of five of flying an airplane in battle. Mrs. Lester, who is a nurse for the Chicago Board of Health, said the battle marked the first her son has been able to catch any Nazi planes in a fight.

Since his youth, young Lester was interested in planes, drawing pictures and making model planes.

He was attending West Virginia State College when he was called into the service in February, 1943, and soon afterwards entered Tuskegee Army Air School as a cadet. He won his wings last December and went overseas in April of this year. 7-29-44

Former Boy Scout

In Chicago he attended Burke elementary school where he graduated in 1937 and then went to Englewood and won his diploma in 1941. At Englewood he won letters in both football and baseball. He also played basketball and was an excellent swimmer.

He is a former Boy Scout and was a member of Troop 535. He is a charter member of the first Explorer Patrol unit for Negroes in America and a member of the Order of the Arrow sponsored by the Scouts.

He was pledged to Kappa Alpha Tsi and a member of Scrollers Club. He attended the Church of Good Shepherd of which his mother is a member.

The plane in which he flies overseas is called "The Spirit of St. Alphonsus" and was built with funds raised by children of the St. Alphonsus School, a Catholic school at 1456 Oakdale Avenue.

College Air Unit at Tuskegee To Close

Afro American-Baltimore
6-24-44 Md.

TUSKEGEE, Ala.—The 2211th AAF Base Unit (old 320th College Training Detachment) here will be discontinued and its personnel given other assignments in the AAF Training Command with the graduation and transfer of Class 44-06, it was announced last week.

The unit was established here February 15, 1943, when the AAF was engaged in a broad program of training and has graduated 13 classes, preparing students for pilot, bombardier or navigation training to be given them in subsequent phases of their AAF careers.

But as the mass training program progressed, pilots, bombardiers and navigators have been turned out in such numbers that the AAF is now able to narrow the base of training activity, emphasis now having shifted from unit to replacement training, it is reported.

THE AIR CORPS STILL PLAYS DIRTY

Defender — Chicago, Ill.

The turbulent history of the Negro in the U. S. Army Air Forces has been a tragic story of bitter disappointment, high hopes and triumphant success.

In every single instance where the brasshat generals who run the air corps have stepped into the picture to dictate discriminatory decisions, the results have been sorry vexation to aspiring Negro pilots. But wherever the black aces have seen action, they have won new glory.

At every opportunity the air corps chiefs from General Hap Arnold down have sidetracked and sabotaged the program for Negro pilots. 12-23-44

When their total and complete opposition to admission of Negro pilots to the corps was vetoed by the White House insistence, they created all possible obstacles to assure the failure of Negro pilots in the air corps program. At one stage of the battle after some early letdowns by Negro airmen in their first showing in the Mediterranean, General Arnold was loud in his demand that the Negro phase of combat aviation be junked entirely.

But through sheer courage against virtually insurmountable obstacles, the Negro heroes of the 332nd Fighter Group have succeeded in converting their aspiring hopes into a smashing success on the Italian front.

However, the brasshats in the Army seem determined even at this late date in the war to turn the clock back and bring about the collapse of the 332nd Fighter Group now in Italy.

Such is the tenor of reports from Roi Ottley, PM war correspondent—stories which have been approved by strict censors and evidentally the truth and nothing but. 12-23-44

Although this unit has chalked up a brilliant record in combat over Munich, Vienna, Toulon, Ploesti, Sofia, Belgrade, Budapest and Friedrichschafen, the smooth-operating gentlemen in high places in the War Department are again using devious means to wreck the program for Negro participation in the war effort in the skies over Europe.

By cutting down on the training program at Tuskegee here at home, by isolating Negro pilots from experienced white combat fliers, by training the few replacements going across in older type planes only, the Air Corps generals are slowly but surely doing their best to

Ottley reports that there are insuffi- writes afford to relax in their ever-vigilant bat-
cient pilots to fly missions. "Casualties tle against Army discrimination lest we
have depleted their ranks and adequate let down our boys on the distant battle-
replacements have failed to arrive. The fields who cannot fight the Nazis and
that Negroes on the home front cann

the race hatelers in America at the same time. 12-23-44

Negro organizations must once again, as they did so effectively in the early stages of the war, demand a full training program for Negro pilots in the Air Corps. They must seek not only equality in training equipment and personnel but also the final smashing of the racial barriers in the Air Corps which not only affect the 332nd Fighter Group but also the total striking power of the Air Corps.

This is no job to be shirked because the end of the war is in sight. This is a post-war job as well. The Negro must find a place in the Air Corps in peacetime too and now is the best time to win that guarantee.

99th Pilot Among Ploesti Raiders Freed By Russians

Defender — Chicago, Ill.
12-23-44

By HARRY McALPIN

WASHINGTON — (NNPA) — A slightly built, 24-year-old first lieutenant of the 99th Fighter Squadron flew into Washington last Tuesday on a four-day assignment to assist in the Sixth War Loan Drive. His retiring manner gave no clew to the experiences he had been through.

He was Lt. Henry A. Wise Jr., of Cheriton, Va. On his left shoulder was the insignia of the 15th Air Force stationed in Italy. He has been home since October, but he can't go back to the European theatre because he is a repatriated prisoner of war.

Lt. Wise was the only Negro among approximately 300 American pilots and air-crew men who were released from prison camps in Bulgaria by the invasion of the Russians two months ago. Like the others, he had come down in enemy territory during one of the raids on the Ploesti oil fields in Romania on August 26.

Plane Catches Fire

12-23-44

Wise was on escort duty. Returning from the raid, his plane caught fire and he bailed out. He landed in a corn field in Bulgaria, where soldiers were waiting for him to come down. They tried to question him, speaking in Bulgarian, German and French. Unable to make him understand, they took him to their headquarters until someone could be found who spoke English.

Apparently the Bulgarians had never seen a Negro before. Lt. Wise said. Everywhere he was moved, he was the subject of surprised stares, a regular exhibition. But he was treated no differently from the other prisoners. They all slept in the same room, ate from the same mess. The food, the housing and the sanitation was poor, he said, but seemed to be the best the Bulgarians had to offer.

When word that the Russian capture of the area was inevitable reached the prison area, the prisoners were moved out over the border and surrendered to the allies. Bulgaria capitulated to the Russians, and in reprisal, the Germans strafed Bulgarian territory. The prison camp from which the air men had been moved just the night before was thoroughly strafed by the Germans the following morning.

12-23-44

Can't Return

Wise's stay overseas was a short one because of his experience. He went over in July and was returned in October. He can't go back to the same theatre, because, under international law, should he do so and become a prisoner of war again, he could be shot as a spy. He will be assigned, probably, to Waterboro or Tuskegee.

He had been on only 13 missions between his arrival overseas in July and his capture in August. During those missions, escorting bombers and strafing the enemy, he said he ran through plenty flak (anti-aircraft fire) but met no enemy fighter plane opposition.

When he returned to his base in Italy, his buddies were amazed. They did not know until two days before his arrival that he was a prisoner. He had been reported missing in action, and many had given him up. 12-23-44

Now he's back in the U. S. where he will likely stay for the duration, because the army air forces have seen fit to assign Negro fighter groups to only one theatre of combat.

They Have Served 3 Years in U.S. Army Air Forces

Afro American — Baltimore, Md.
4-1-44

4-1-44

Tuskegee Army Air Field officers and enlisted men, all at one time with the now famous 99th Fighter Squadron, who have completed three years of service with the Army Air Forces. They are, left to right, first row: A/C Wendell Hockaday, Norfolk, Va; Lt. O. O. Miller, Grand Rapids, Mich.; Lt. Kenneth Myles, NYC; Cpl. Concord W. Turner, Champaign, Ill. Second row: T/Sgt. Paul Woodson, Washington; Cpl. Kenneth White, NYC; T/Sgt. John Spann, Philadelphia; Sgt. John White, Birmingham, Ala.; Sgt. Andrew Collins, San Antonio, Tex.; T/Sgt. Clarence W. Nelson, Philadelphia. Fourth row: M/Sgt. John Calloway, E. Orange, N.J.; Henry McLendon, NYC; Lt. Walter Moore, Winthrop, Mass.; Lt. Robert Marshall, Minneapolis, Minn.; Lt. Paul V. Freeman, St. Louis, Mo.; M/Sgt. James Blackstone, Annapolis, Md.; and S/Sgt. Harry Woods, Lexington, Ky.

47a-1944

Reveal Trickery In Shift of Pilots from Selfridge Field

Call — Kansas City, Mo.

Separate Club Back Of Trouble

7-22-44

Militant Flyers Transferred to Southern Fields

DETROIT.—(ANP)—Bit by bit, the explanation of why Negro fliers are no longer being trained at Selfridge field comes to light. The secret, almost mysterious manner in which the two latest Negro flying units stationed there, the 553d Pursuit squadron and the 477th Bombardier group, were hustled away over night; the 553d going to Walterboro, S. C., and the 477th to Godman Field, Ky., begins to fit into a pattern.

Mere liberal elements in the air corps were hopeful when Selfridge field was selected as the site for putting the finishing or combat touches upon Negro pursuit contingents and Negro bombardier groups. The place is a blank now so far as Negro occupancy and participation is concerned. The project went down from body blows administered by some of the more narrow and prejudiced officers of the army air corps and stands as a warning from them as to the distance which Negroes will be permitted to go in that branch as well as what will happen to them if they run afoul of air corps tradition. 7-22-44

It seems fantastic that so small a thing as the demand by Negro officers that they be permitted to share the army equipped and maintained officers' club could wreck an entire training program. There apparently are forces in the air corps however which are malignant enough to deny the army credo that "all officers are gentlemen" and who refuse to accept Negro officers on a basis befitting their uniforms.

OFFICERS CLUB CAUSES TROUBLE

It was last spring when the 447th Bombardier group moved into Selfridge field and about the same time when the 553d Pursuit squadron which had also received its initial training at Tuskegee, was activated there. The 99th squadron, long since abroad, had been followed to Italy by the 332d Fighter group, also a Negro outfit, and which had finished its training at Selfridge. There was some question whether the 553d would be developed as a group or serve merely as replacements with the latter probability considered more likely. 7-22-44

Conditions at Selfridge had never been too good. The post commander had been Colonel Coleman, who shot a Negro orderly. Negro officers were excluded from the officers' club and they did not like that fact. 7-21-44

One day a white intelligence officer summoned one of the more independent officers for a conference. He quizzed the officer for an hour and a half and it developed that his purpose was to run down a rumor that the Negro officers had planned to move in force on the officers' club and make a test case of whatever happened. The intelligence officer was told that his information was right and that the date for the invasion was already set. The colored officers had gotten around the claim that they were not members through 45 of them filing applications on March 24. The Negro officers outnumbered the whites on the post four to one, the only whites being post personnel and flying instructors.

Col. Selway, the group commander, called a meeting of the Negro fliers, March 25, and read a letter from Col. Boyd, the post commander who had succeeded Colman. In his letter Col. Boyd refused to take action on the applications. Col. Selway concluded by saying:

"In my group, if you want to make my team, you will play ball my way. If anyone in my group protests the decision of the post commander, I will give him an unsatisfactory on his efficiency rating." 7-21-44

"NEGRO OFFICERS NOT EQUAL TO WHITE"

The Negro officers were incensed over the incident and the white officers were cognizant of the unrest. On Wednesday morning, March 28, Maj. Gen. Frank O. Hunter, chief of the first air corps with headquarters at Mitchell field, L. I., flew in. Gen. Hunter had just visited the field a few days before. All of the officers, white and colored, were assembled in the post theater. Gen. Hunter, addressing the assemblage, said:

"Men, I had to come back and I came back just to tell you one thing and that is that there is not going to be any race problem at Selfridge field. I will not tolerate it.

"This country is not ready or willing to accept a colored officer as the equal of a white one. I am not here to argue whether that is right or wrong, and I will not allow you to use this post to fight the race issue. You are not in the army to advance your race. Your prime purpose should be in taking your training and fighting for your country and winning the war. In that way you can do a deal for both your race and your country. 7-21-44

"As for racial agitators, they shall be weeded out and dealt with. I'll make it hard for you.

"I have gone to a great deal of trouble to have $75,000 appropriated for a separate club here on the post," he concluded as he climbed in his plane and left.

The Negro fliers had already voted on the question of a separate club and voted unanimously not to have it. To get around army regulations 2-10, par. 19, the post authorities proposed to call the new club a recreation hall. It was to be located in the very center of the Negro area.

Work on the club began. The men were determined not to accept a jim crow club in a state with a civil rights statute on its books. Brig. Gen. B. O. Davis came to Selfridge to make an inspection. He is said to have blistered post officials in his report.

SQUELCH PLANS FOR SEPARATE BUILDING

Pressure to halt the building of the club went to Washington. Truman Gibson is credited with helping to stop the erection of the duplicate club even after the foundation was laid.

Dissatisfaction still reigned. Wholesale resignations were averted by cooler heads who pointed out that they would merely be drafted as privates without better-ing the situation. The Davis-Gibson pressure is said to have helped relieve Col. Boyd of his command, though no improvement came from the change. Col. Selway, second in command, succeeded Boyd and carried on the same despotic type of rule. 7-21-44

Incensed at the solidarity of the men, Col. Selway spent two weeks away from the post. It is reported that it was at this time the plot to transfer the fliers from Selfridge field was reached. When Selway returned he whispered it about that the group would be sent North. They were.

On May 5, the 553d was loaded on one train and the 477th Bombardier on another. The trains went north 31 miles to Port Huron then backed 30 miles to Battle Creek. When the men woke up the next morning, they were in Dixie. The 553d was at Walterboro, S. C., a viciously bad location.

The 477th went to Godman field, Ky., a field which was used in the last world war and which has the same barracks and inadequate runways which it had then. The field is small and dangerous. Despite its bad condition the 477th has flown 200 flying days without a single accident but it is apparently only a matter of time until they begin to crack up. Godman field was taken out of the 3d air force and transferred to the first so that Gen. Hunter and Col. Selway are still in charge of these men. 7-21-44

MAROONED IN DIXIE

The plan evidently was to put units where state laws would facilitate jim crowing. The officer's club at Godman field, old and creaky, was turned over to the Negro officers with the reported remark, "There's your club. You've been asking for a club. Now you've got it."

Selway has signs posted everywhere which repeat his favorite slogan, "Get To Your Damned Guns."

Col. Selway holds daily staff conferences but excludes the two or three Negro officers on his staff. The 477th is not expected to be ready for 10 months. Since they have gone south all key positions have been taken over by white officers, the colored men who hold them either being transferred or unassigned. Originally the plans called for a white commander who was to have all colored staff officers.

Complaints continue to go in to Washington. As a result Gen. Arnold sent his second in command, Lt. Gen. Barney Giles, to Godman field to ivestigate. Unfortunately Gen. Giles called only a handful of Negro officers in and kept the post commander in while he talked to them. The first officer who spoke up, Selway squelched and the others said nothing. The result is that Gen. Giles never heard the many complaints which the men had. He did promise new squash courts, swimming pool, a larger PX and a number of irrevalent things none of which was at the heart of the bad morale on the post. 7-21-44

Talks with the colored officers reveal that they are highly dissatisfied with their commanding officer at Godman field and with the group surgeon. The latter, a member of the race, is credited with being the funnel through which every move made by colored officers reaches Col. Selway.

Can the mere matter of entry in an officer's club open up a Pandora box of prejudices and thus hamstring a group with the possibilities of the 477th? Apparently this tiny social barrier closed the gates of Selfridge field to Negro fliers.

Oust Colonel At Selfridge Field

Courier—Pittsburgh, Pa.

WASHINGTON—Following sweeping charges of gross discrimination, segregation and indignities against the colored personnel at Selfridge Field, Mich., Lt. Col. Charles A. Gayle has been removed as commanding officer of the 553rd Replacement Squadron, which moved at the U.S. army air base as severe disciplinary treatment for the 332nd Fighter Group, under violation of military regulations command of Lt. Col. Benjamin O. Davis, which make open the Post Officers' months ago. 3-7-44 overseas several club facilities to all officer personnel at Selfridge Field.

The specific charge against the Texas-born colonel is that he abusively ordered out of the Post Officers' club three Negro flying officers, two of whom had only recently climaxed heroic combat service with the 99th Pursuit Squadron in Italy. The incident took place on New Year's Day.

In addition to removal and replacement by Lt. Col. John Triffy, the ousted colonel may face court martial or be forced to undergo

Negro Fliers Shoot Up Nazi Craft In Romania

3-31-44

HEADQUARTERS OF THE 15TH AIR FORCE, Italy—(AP)—Negro fighter pilots of the 15th Air Force pounced on a crowded German airfield Wednesday near Oradea, just inside the Western Ro-

manian border, and dozens of enemy planes.

The Fortress destroyed was announced pending a study tographs, but included were a num- planes.

The Russians on just moved country.

Led by Capt. Alfonza W. Davis, five separate passes over their grounded quarry, leaving the field out of the path of the Russ- ber of Merseburg powered gliders

Given Air Commissions At Tuskegee

Daily world—Atlanta, Ga. 9-16-44

9-16-44

Having recently completed the Army Air Forces Training Command's course of pilot instruction at the Tuskegee Army Air Field, single engine pilots received ratings and appointments in the AAF on September 8, in the Post Chapel. Kneeling reading from left to right: Lt. George E. Hardy, Philadelphia; Lt. Edward S. Bishop, Brooklyn; 2nd Lt. William M. Cousins, Philadelphia; 2nd Lt. Lawrence I. Miller, Los Angeles; F-O Milton S. Washington, Willow Grove, Pa., 2nd Lt. Emmett R. Anders, Carbondale, Ill.; 2nd Lt. John L. Whitehead, Lawrenceville, Va., and F-O William P. Armstrong, Providence, R. I. Standing—first row reading from left to right: F-O Edward E. Manley, Los Angeles; 2nd Lt. Carl R. Carey, St. Louis; 2nd Lt. James Coleman, Detroit; F-O Morris E. Gant, Chicago; 2nd Lt. Samuel G. Leftenant, Amytyville, N. Y.; F-O Samuel Mathieu, Birmingham; 2nd Lt. William H. Holloman, St. Louis; and 2nd Lt. Steven Jenkins, Columbus, Ohio. Last row—standing: F-O Robert Johnson, Pittsburgh; F-O Charles Cooper, Washington, D. C.; 2nd Lt. Felix M. McCrory, Yuma, Ariz.; F-O John W. Squires, St. Louis; 2nd Lt. George E. Franklin, Joliet, Ill.; F-O Charles A. Lane, St. Louis; Student Officers, 1st Lt. Albert L'euteau, New Orleans, and 2nd Lt. Herbert C. Barland of Chicago.—(Official U. S. AAF Photo by AAF Training Command)

Walter White on His Trip Abroad Finds 'Limitations' On News About Negro

Bystander—Des Moines, Iowa.

5-18-44

(The Associated Negro Press is exclusively revealing for the first time sections of the report prepared by Walter White, executive secretary, NAACP, for the War Department dealing with his visit to North Africa and Italy. This is one of two articles treating of the report.)

By ERNEST E. JOHNSON

Washington (ANP)—British and American censors abroad have given news correspondents specific orders imposing "strict limitations" upon them as to the kind of news regarding Negro soldiers which they are permitted to file for foreign consumption.

Walter White, NAACP secretary, who made the 20,000 mile journey through the European and Middle Eastern and Mediterrean Theaters of Operations last winter, made this statement in a private report which he prepared and submitted to the war department April 22. 5-18-44

Further, Mr. White who traveled as the representative of the New York Post, told in this report that a certain portion of a story which he wanted to file was found objectonable by Algiers censors.

"No' Negroes Allowed

The section pointed out "the improvement of racial relations as men approached the battle front," but cited the presence of a "No Negroes" allowed order posted in a Naples hotel, allegedly signed by an American army officer, to show that "the millenium had not been achieved." The White report said:

"The Algiers censors both British and American deleted virtually every pertinent part of the story. I was told that if I would insert a statement to the effect that this anti- Negro propaganda was the work of the Nazi agents, the story would be passed. I refused to do this because I would have been guilty of making a false statement had I done so."

He then referred to the occasion when he was shown in London a copy of orders to correspondents establishing strict limitations on news dispatches regarding Negroes.

5-18-44

Censorship Needs Revision

"When there is any question of military security," White ventured, "such limtiations are of course, justified. But I am strongly of the opinion that there should be a drastic revision of censorship rules to permit and even to encourage more news regarding the part being played by Negro troops in various theaters of operations.

"I further believe that there should not be unreasonable limitations on other news regarding Negroes and the relationship between Negro and white American troops. 5-18-44

The publication of practices such as these reported would have salutary results, in my opinion, as I believe the majority of the American people would condemn such practices and thereby cause them to be less frequent. Suppression of such news merely accelerates the spreading of disturbing rumors which affect morale."

Fighter Pilot Is Killed At Tuskegee

Journal + Guide—Norfolk Va.

5-6-44

TUSKEGEE ARMY AIR FIELD, Ala.—Second Lieutenant Francis B. Peoples, 24, of 308 Parkspring street, Henderson, N. C., was killed while making a routine combat training mission at the Tuskegee Army Air Field on April 27. The young pilot was flying in a P-40 fighter plane.

A board of qualified Army Air Force officers has been appointed to investigate and determine the exact cause of the accident. 5-6-44

Lieutenant Peoples was a former student at Hampton Institute where he was well known in athletic circles. He was a member of the latest class of pilots to graduate from Tuskegee Army Air Field, and was commissioned on April 15, 1944. His wife is the former Lucille C. Jones, 75 West 141st street, New York City, and his parents reside at 308 Rockspring street, Henderson, N. C.

Before his career as an aviation cadet, Lieutenant Peoples was a driver and gunner in the 758th Tank Battalion, Camp Hood, Texas.

47a-1944

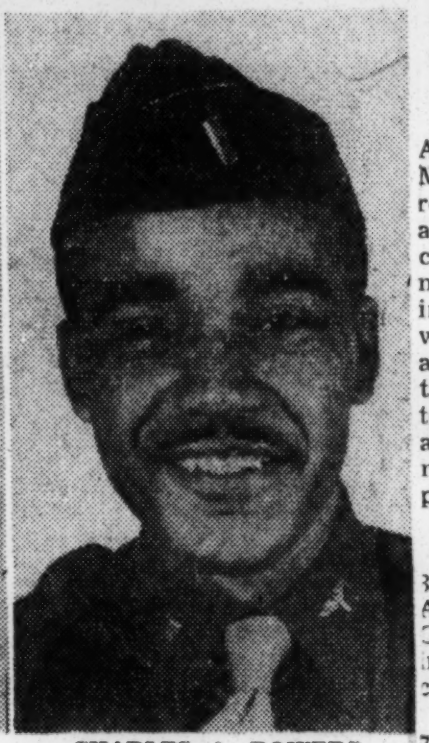
Combat Navigators Receive Wings At Texas Air Field

N.Y., Amsterdam News
N.Y.
12-30-44

CHARLES W. DUNN

EGBERT A. CRAIG, JR.

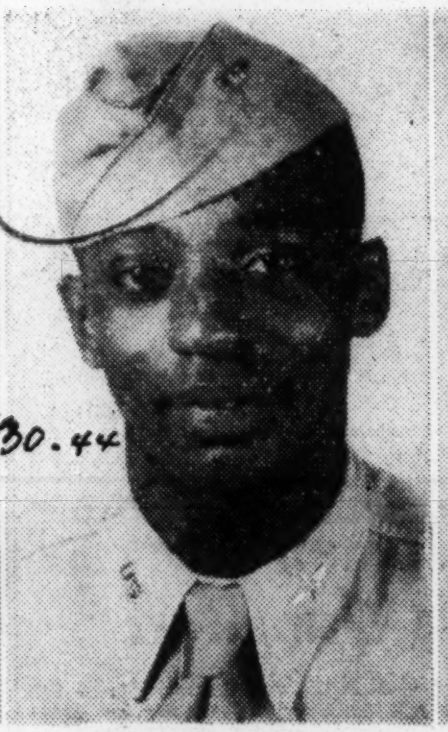
JAMES S. WESLEY, JR.



CHARLES A. BOWERS

MAURICE THOMAS

JAMES H. GALLWEY



REUBEN J. RUTLEDGE

AUSTIN D. McKENZIE

12.30.44

HONDO ARMY AIR FIELD, HONDO, TEXAS—Several hundred navigation cadets won silver navigator wings and Army Air Forces commissions at this huge AAF Training Command air base this week, as graduation speaker Capt. Edward M. Gervasia, veteran of the air war against the Japanese, stressed that "success in aerial combat depends upon the alert teamwork in the bomber crew and top physical conditioning." Among them were the following from Greater New York: Second Lieut. Charles A. Bowers, 24, son of Mrs. Carrie M. Bowers, 262 Decatur St., Brooklyn. Lt. Bowers attended the New York University majoring in biology. He was commissioned a 2nd Lt. prior to taking the navigation course. Second Lieut. Egbert A. Craig, Jr., 22, son of Mr. Egbert A. Craig, 541 Franklin Ave., and Mrs. Beryl Bachelor, 767 E. 163rd St., Brooklyn. Lt. Craig attended Brooklyn College majoring in Spanish. Second Lieut. Charles W. Dunn, 24, son of Mrs. Sarah J. Dunn, Sidney, New York. Second Lieut. James H. Gallwey, 19, son of Mr. Sydney B. Gallwey, 69 Dagmar, Winnipeg, Canada, and Mrs. Rebecca H. Gallwey, 566 5th St., Owego, N. Y. Flight Officer Austin D. McKenzie, 25, son of Mrs. Marsella McKenzie, 282 Manhattan Ave., New York, N. Y. Second Lieut. Reuben J. Rutledge, 24, 335 Decatur St., Brooklyn. Lt. Rutledge attended Brooklyn College for three years majoring in English. Second Lieut. Maurice Thomas, Jr., 23, son of Mr. Maurice Thomas, 174-38 Polhemus Ave., Jamaica, N. Y., and Second Lieut. James S. Wesley, Jr., 25, son of Mr. and Mrs. James S. Wesley, 493 Gates Ave., Brooklyn, N. Y. Lt. Wesley attended the Brooklyn Eve College. He received his commission as 2nd Lt. prior to taking the navigation course.

New Fliers From Now In Italy

Journal + Guide
All Sections
Norfolk, Va. 10-7-44

To Be Assigned To Various Units

By Col. Davis

By JOHN "ROVER" JORDAN
Guide War Correspondent
(Copyright. Reproduction Forbidden.)

AN ADVANCED ALLIED AIRBASE IN ITALY—(Via Air Mail—Delayed) — Sixteen new replacement pilots, representing all section of the country, recently reported to Col. Benjamin O. Davis Jr., for assignment in the Mustang Fighter Group which he commands in this theatre. The pilots, fresh from training and replacement centers in the states, will soon see action as pilots of the Air Corps' newest model P-51 fighter planes.

The replacement pilots are:

2nd Lt. Milton S. Hays, 3771½ LaSalle avenue, Los Angeles, son of Mr. and Mrs. George L. Hays. Before entering the service he was an aircraft riveter. 10-7-44

2nd Lt. Hamilton M. Cox Jr., 7920 South Wabash avenue, Chicago, husband of Mrs. Vera May Cox. He was a student of Central College.

2nd Lt. Elbert Hudson, 324 E. Jefferson Blvd., Los Angeles, son of Dr. Henry C. Hudson. He was a student of UCLA.

2nd Lt. Walter P. Manning, 346 N. 42nd street. Philadelphia, son of Mr. and Mrs. George L. Manning. He attended St. Paul Polytechnic College and Howard University. He was an outstanding athlete.

2nd Lt. Roland W. Moody, 187 Fayer Weather street, Cambridge, Mass., son of Mr. and Mrs. Oliver D. Moody. He was a student of Northeast School of Engineering, Boston.

2nd Lt. Henry R. Peoples, 526 Leeton avenue, St. Louis., son of Mr. and Mrs. John A. Peoples. He was graduated from Hampton in 1942. 10-7-44

2nd Lt. Earl R. Lane, 1165 E. 294th street, Wickliffe, O., son of Mr. and Mrs. Levi M. Lane. He was an outstanding athlete at Wilberforce.

2nd Lt. John H. Porter, 4450 Cedar avenue, Cleveland, son of Mrs. Florence B. Thornton Before the war he was a civil aviation patrol pilot.

2nd Lt. Roosevelt Stiger. He was a student of the University of Michigan.

Flight Officer Rual W. Bell Jr., 13 N. E. Tillamock, Portland, O., husband of Mrs. Mary M. Bell. He was an office secretary before entering service.

Flight Officer Carl J. Woods, Box 177, Mars, Penn., son of Mr.

Tuskegee Pilot Chutes To Safety
Defender—Chicago, Ill.
4-29-44

ALPHARETTA, Ga.—(ANP) — A Tuskegee army air base cadet parachuted to safety from his advance trainer plane north of this community on Wednesday night, according to information from public relations headquarters of the At-

...M. Morris, 102
...rtment C, Se-
...band of Mrs.
The father of
a painter be-
service.

...was employed
...hanic at Ford

...and Mrs. Jesse L. Woods. He was a student of Pennsylvania State College. 10-7-44

2nd Lt. William M. Wheeler, Black street, Fisherville, N. C., 3867 McArthur place, Detroit, son of Mr. and Mrs. William son of Mr. and Mrs. Leon C. Craig. He was a retail grocer Wheeler. He was a student of before entering the service. Howard University.

2nd Lt. Harold M. M...
10th avenue, Apartme...
attle, Wash., husband
Jessie E. Morris. The
one child, he was a pa...
fore entering the servi...

Flight Officer Vincent I. Mit-
chell, 4468 Kentucky avenue,
Mt. Clemens, Mich., son of Mr.
and Mrs. Norman V. Mitchell.

2nd Lt. J. D. Wheeler, 25101 Blair avenue, Roseville, Mich., husband of Mrs. Mary Virginia Wheeler. Father of two chil-

lanta army base.

The cadet was identified as E. S. Bishope of New York City. According to the information, Cadet Bishope was enroute from Tuskegee on a routine flight. The plane was said to be a total wreck. A board of inquiry was to determine the cause of the accident and no official details have yet been released.

Use of Negro Pilots Attacked; Group Head Replies to Charge

Crash Recalled

Anniston, Ala., Dec. 16 (AP).—An Anniston business executive whose son was killed in a recent air collision involving an army pursuit plane piloted by a Negro today protested the "sudden elevation of the Negro to duties he is not yet qualified to perform" in a letter to the Anniston Star and the war department.

Earl C. Knowlton, head of the Anniston water works, said his only son, Lt. Earl C. Knowlton Jr., pilot of a B-24, and 11 others were killed, in addition to the Negro pilot of the pursuit plane, in a recent accident near Charleston, S. C.

"I knew that my boy might have to give his life for his country," Knowlton wrote, "but I expected it to accomplish some useful purpose, and not to be sacrificed to the fanatical idea that all men must be allowed to perform on the same level regardless of background qualification.

Ordered to Do So.

"I hold no blame against the Negro who flew a fighter plane into a bomber, killing my boy and 11 others. He flew that plane because he was ordered to do so.

"But, with all my heart, I resent our government's apparent determination to raise the Negro overnight, as it were, to a place in civilization which he is as yet unprepared to assume.

"With rare exceptions, his mind is not prepared to make the split-second decisions which mean life or death in the operation of so swift and so complicated and so deadly a mechanism as an airplane.

"Negroes were among the first to come to my home to offer sympathy in my boy's death. They attended the funeral service. They loved him. He loved them. So, this is not a letter of hate.

Very Deep Resentment.

"It is the expression of the very deep resentment I feel toward the fetishism of our government in its attitude toward an unnatural and impossibly sudden elevation of the Negro to duties he is not yet qualified to perform.

"Some will say that the accident might have happened if a white man had been piloting the fighter plane. That is true. But the percentage against it would have been in my boy's favor."

Record Is Cited

New York, Dec. 16 (AP).—Roy Wilkins, acting secretary of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, today replied in a statemen to the charges of Earl C. Knowlton, an Anniston, Ala., business man, about the use of Negro pilots. The statement follows:

"We can understand the grief and disappointment of a father who expected that if his son should lose his life in serving his country, it would not be in an accident.

"But the record of Negro combat pilots to date in actual combat . . . would seem to prove that Negroes are capable of handling a combat airplane and making split-second decisions at more than 400 miles an hour.

"Mr. Knowlton says his letter is not one of hatred and we believe him so far as his feeling for this one Negro pilot is concerned; but his main thesis, which is that the Negro is still a kind of uncivilized, lower animal incapable of adjusting himself to civilization, is an underhand cut at the whole Negro race.

"From the very beginning in 1940, Negro-Americans have spent most of their energies struggling to get a chance to fight the enemies of our country, and this incident is just one more of the many that have been used to discourage him and to relegate him to strictly menial and service work in uniform."

Tuskegee Hawks Defeat Hornets

Courier - Kansas City, Mo. 10-13-44

MONTGOMERY, Ala. — The Tuskegee Army Air Force Warhawks pushed over two touchdowns in the second period and scored a third touchdown and a safety in the final to defeat a game but much outweighed Alabama State Teachers college eleven here Saturday afternooon 21-0 in Hornet stadium.

It was the opening game of the season for both teams and began with a colorful crowd of soldiers, students, and townspeople with two bands on hand to witness the event. A heavy downpour of rain at the mid-point of the second quarter and continued throughout the most of the game, turning the grid into a water-soaked mass over which the players skidded and splashed and the ball fell out of grasping hands for costly fumbles. One such fumble paved the way for the final touchdown. Captain Drye's TAAF band managed to get in a few hot numbers in competition with the Alabama State band before the rains came.

We Expected This

Journal + Guide — Norfolk, Va.

THE ACCIDENT near Walterboro, South Carolina, which caused the death of 12 bomber plane crew members and one fighter pilot as the result of an aerial collision, was one of many such accidents that have occurred since the beginning of the war. In the very nature of the extensive training of thousands of men for combat such accidents are to be expected once in a while.

12-23-44

It happened, unfortunately, that the fighter pilot trainee, involved in the Walterboro accident, was a Negro. That fact has been the occasion for the sending of a bitter letter of resentment to the War Department, and the giving of the letter to the press, by the father of one of the bomber crew members who lost his life.

The writer of the letter was an Alabaman, who protested "the sudden elevation of the Negro to duties he is not yet qualified to perform." The writer of the letter went on to say that he resented the government's "apparent determination" to "raise the Negro overnight, as it were, to a place in civilization which he is as yet unprepared to assume."

No one has as yet officially placed the blame for the collision on the Negro fighter pilot. There were two planes in the collision. Who knows which of the two pilots was responsible for what happened?

12-23-44

The Alabaman went on to say that "with rare exceptions" the Negro's mind "is not prepared to make the split-second decisions which mean life or death in the operation of so swift and so complicated and so deadly a mechanism as an airplane."

Except in rare instances the same is true of men of all races—even the Alabaman's — and the war has demonstrated this. The men who have been chosen to pilot war planes have been selected by the identical physical and mental tests.

Accidents in training and in combat have proved that once in a while a man—no matter what his race or nationality—will fail in the making of split-second decisions.

In the Sicily invasion eighteen American transport planes loaded with soldiers were shot down by Allied guns. They were not manned by Negro gunners.

As a matter of fact, one of the Negro fighter pilots of the original 99th Fighter Squadron, while flying combat missions over Sicily in the summer of 1943, succeeded in evading all of the German gunfire and interceptors only to be shot down in the Mediterranean by American anti-aircraft batteries which were not manned by Negro gunners. This pilot, LT. GEORGE RICHARD BOLLING, of Phoebus, Va., spent all night in the water before he was rescued. Fortunately, he lived to fight more than 70 combat missions.

12-23-44

Negro fighter pilots in this war have been put through the severest tests in battle and have come through successfully. Some now wear the coveted Distinguished Flying Cross. Negro fighter pilot groups have successfully convoyed bombers with white crews in fighting over the whole of southern Europe. They have served with honor and distinction. The deplorable accident in South Carolina is the only one of record. It does not prove that anything can happen to a Negro pilot that has not happened to white pilots.

Chi Cadet Killed in TAAF Plane Crash

Afro American Balt. Md.

TUSKEGEE ARMY AIR FIELD, Ala.—Aviation Cadet Raymond C. McEwen, a graduate of Dusaible High School, Chicago, and a former student of Fisk University and the University of Minnesota, was killed instantly when the plane in which he was making a routine training flight crashed near the field on Thursday.

A boatd of Army Air Force officers has been appointed to investigate and determine the exact cause of the accident. 10-21-44

Cadet McEwen, a future fighter pilot trainee at this station, was entering the advanced phase of his training. He is the son of Mrs. Ethel McEwen of 2939 Vincennes Avenue, Chicago.

Army Air Pilot Killed In Flight

Journal & Guide — Norfolk, Va. 10-21-44

TUSKEGEE ARMY AIR FIELD, Ala. —(ANP)— Second Lt. George Kenneth Hayes of Los Angeles, was killed while making a routine cross country combat training mission near Birmingham, June 12, according to the public relations office here.

The young pilot was flying a single-engine fighter craft at the time of the mishap. A board of qualified Army air force officers has been appointed to investigate and determine the exact cause of the accident.

Lt. Hayes, a former student of the University of California, has a brother in the Army air forces, serving as a fighter pilot at the Walterboro Army Air Field, in South Carolina. 6-24-44

He is the son of the Rev. and Mrs. George L. Hayes of Los Angeles and was a member of the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity. Prior to his enlistment in the service, which was by appointment as an aviation cadet, he was employed in the terminal annex in Los Angeles.

4 Ex-Civilian Pilots Get Commissions as Instructors

Afro-American Balt., Md. 6-24-44

TUSKEGEE, Ala. — The first graduating class of civilian pilot instructors here to receive commissions as former athletes Flight Officers Adolph Moret, Jr., New Orleans; James O. Plinton, Jr., Westfield, N.J., and Charles W. Stephens, Monroeville, Ala. They were: Archie F. Williams, of Oakland, Calif.; Trained 99th Flyers

The men, all pioneer aviators, who have a combined total of 7,300 flying hours, were brought here in 1942 to train the first members of the 99th Fighter Squadron.

A weather officer at this station, Lieutenant Williams, who holds the world's record in the 400-meter dash, was the only student officer to receive his service pilot's wings.

47a-1944

Hits Race Friction Abroad

The Call
Kansas City, Mo.
5-5-44

Walter White Speaks Over CBS Network

HEARD ON KMBC

This program was broadcast by transcription over station KMBC Monday night, May 1.

NEW YORK. — Racial friction between colored and white American soldiers overseas, although corrected to a marked degree by Genreal Dwight D. Eisenhower, is still hurting the war effort and should be completely eliminated, said Walter White, NAACP secretary, in a nationwide radio talk over the Columbia Broadcasting System Sunday, April 30.

"The division in our ranks and the fomenting of racial and other antagonism are postponing the day of victory," he declared. "They are creating doubt among our Allies as to our sincerity when we assert that we are fighting a war for freedom for all peoples.

"Who ever causes the war to last one single day longer than necessary is as much a traitor to our country as one who sinks a troop ship or reveals military secrets to the enemy.

If for no other reason than to win the war as soon as it is humanly posible and to save the lives of American men — perhaps among them the life of your son — it is imperative that any person, whatever his race, who causes trouble should be stopped.

That will be done only if the people of America and their government stop evading or temporizing with this fundamental question whose solution is imperative if we are ever to have a world of peace."

Traveled 20,000 Miles

White, who spent 15 weeks in Great Britain, Ireland, North Africa and Italy, said he had traveled more than 20,000 miles and had talked with many officers, soldiers and civilians.

"The majority of American soldiers abroad have been decent Americans interested in but one objective — winning the war as speedily as possible and returning home. A surprisingly large percentage of them — both officers and enlisted personnel — are concerned over the bad name being given to the United States by the friction which some of their number have caused.

"A gratifyingly large percentage manifest deep concern about the world problem of race and the necessity of working out a solution to it. Many of these are from the South. But unfortunately, a highly aggressive and vocal minority has sought to transplant pattern of racial behaviour like that of the most backward states of the South to the countries where they have been sent as soldiers to fight a war against Nazi racial theories.

"Some of them have sought to poison the minds of British, Italian, North African and other peoples against Negro Americans. They have told such stories as these: that Negroes are inferior, illiterate, diseased, and savage. Some of them have even used physical violence to prevent the association of Negro soldiers with British, Italian and other people. They have objected to the use of places of public accommodation such as pubs and restaurants by Negro soldiers.

"Such behaviour has puzzled and antagonized many of the people of these countries. They have found it difficult to understand why some American soldiers should be so violent in their hatred of other American soldiers, especially when all of them are fighting in a common cause. They have resented the action of visitors presuming to dictate to them who they should or should not invite into their homes or associate with.

Allies Puzzled by Segregation

"Many of our allies are puzzled too by the American pattern of segregation. Repeatedly I was asked why the United States, fighting a war for freedom, should send abroad two armies—one white and one Negro."

Generals Eisenhower and John C. H. Lee of the European Theatre of Operations were praised by Mr. White for issuing "unequivocal directives and taking other steps to eliminate the cause of trouble."

White scored the events of the past few months on the home front saying, "certain members of Congress have poured forth hate-filled tirades against the Commander-in-Chief of our nation and against racial and religious minorities, as vicious and intemperate in content and tone as any sent out by Goebbels from Berlin."

He cited the politics in the soldiers' vote bill, the boasts of filibusters against the anti-poll tax bill, and the statements of defiance against the supreme court for its opinion in the Texas primary case. He also hit Congressman Andrew J. May of Kentucky for his threat against the War department which caused it to cancel its plan to distribute the pamphlet "The Races of Mankind."

White said, "as men aproach actual combat and face the dangers of combat, they tend to discount many prejudices," and he praised the combat record of the 99th Pursuit Squadron and the work of Negro supply troops on the Anzio beachhead.

The radio talk inaugurated the nationwide membership campaign of the NAACP which opened May 1 and will close June 30.

First Negro Bomber Group Low In Spirits, Morale Shot, Scribe Finds

Defender — Chicago, Ill.
9-2-44

(First Of A Series)

By HARRY McALPIN
NNPA White House Correspondent

WASHINGTON (NNPA)—Can an efficient bombardment team, capable of holding its own in combat overseas, be developed under a condition that crushes the spirit of officers and enlisted men, destroys their morale, puts them on the verge of psychoneurosis, and makes them hate the guts of their commanding officer?

This is the question-mark overshadowing the 477th Bombardment Group now stationed at forsaken and isolated Godman Field, Ky.,—the first Negro unit of its kind in Army history.

The 477th Bombardment Group was organized and stationed at Selfridge Field in Michigan, near Detroit in February, 1944. It was placed under the command of Col. Robert Selway, who had been in command of the training of the fighter group turned over to Col. Benj. O. Davis Jr., and sent overseas. Col. Selway is still in command of the 477th. 9-2-44

Problems At Selfridge

Many of the problems which now exist at Godman were born at Selfridge Field. The most noticeable incident at Selfridge—excluding the shooting of a Negro soldier by Col. Colman, then base commander, last fall—was the officer club incident. That incident is explanatory of much that is happening today. Here it is as never revealed before:—

The officers club at Selfridge was at one time used by all officers, white and colored. When Col. Benj. O. Davis Jr., then a lieutenant colonel, was returned to the United States from overseas and assigned to the fighter group then training at Selfridge, a reception was given him in the officers club.

After the 477th was activated, there was an occasion when three Negro officers went to the club and ordered beer. They were served. But while sitting at a table, a white major came up to them and told them they did not belong there. He told them to leave. 9-2-44

One of the three officers informed the major that the club was for officers and gentlemen, that they were officers and gentlemen, and that they saw no reason to leave. When the officer repeated the suggestion, he was asked if that was an order. He turned on his heels and went upstairs for Col. Boyd, then the post commander, who was present at the club during the time.

Told To Leave

Col. Boyd came down, approached the men and told them they had better leave. He was told of the existence of War Department Order 210-10, which said all buildings and facilities were available to all men on a post. He insisted the men leave the club. Asked whether that was an order, the colonel left without saying more.

Following this incident, the Negro officers, in their individual capacities and not as a protest or petition, filed applications for membership in the club. Their quarters were inadequate and no other recreation was available to them on the post. The apparent sudden change in policy, as indicated by the experience of the three officers, had stunned them. 9-2-44

Col. Boyd wrote a letter in which he refused to take favorable action on the club membership applications. He told one of the Negro officers at the base to go back and tell the boys that "I am the big fat s-o-b who said for them not to use the club, and tell them I said so."

Col. Selway, then as now the group commander of the 477th, called a meeting of the Negro officers and told them that Negroes were not to go to the club and were not to make application for membership. He read Col. Boyd's letter, and said: "In my group, if you want to make the team, you will play ball my way. If anyone in my group protests the decision of the post commander, I will give him an unsatisfactory efficiency rating."

Many of the men withdrew their applications for fear of being reclassified. 9-2-44

But word of the incident reached the White House. From there it is reported to have gone to the top officials of the Army. An investigation was made substantiating the complaint. This conclusion is drawn from the fact that the top Army officials took the matter in hand and ordered it cleaned up.

The War Department, to the embarrassment of the Air Forces, stood behind WD 210-10, and immediately after the investigation, Col. Boyd was transferred away from the base, the commanding officer of the 553rd Fighter Group was transferred, as was also the major who instigated the incident in the club with the three Negro officers.

New Warning

It was after this action had been taken by the War Department that Gen. F. O. D. Hunter came to the base and made a speech on the incident. He was apparently giving the Air Forces' answer to the Army action. He said that in the past there had been no racial problems at the base and that he did not intend to have any now.

He stated the War Department is not ready yet to recognize Negroes on a plane of social equality with white men. Whether this was right or wrong, he said he did not know. He added, that the group was no place to try to advance the Negro race. Wait until you go overseas and do something to make your race proud of you, he told the men.

A decision was then made to avoid further embarrassment to the Air Forces, since the Army had shown an inclination to uphold the officers in their rights. It was just a short time later that the 477th and the 553rd were transferred from Selfridge to Godman Field in Kentucky and Walterboro, S.C., respectively.

9-2-44

He concluded by saying all agitators would be weeded out and dealt

47a-1944

14 Officers Act To

Smash Color Bar At Tuskegee Airfield

Courier—Pittsburgh, Pa.
8-19-44

By JACK DAY, Special Correspondent

Exclusive! TUSKEGEE, Ala.—Fourteen Negro officers, backed by the War Department directive outlawing segregation in Army post exchanges and restaurants, put an end to segregation at the Tuskegee Army Air Field post restaurant. Wednesday, a week ago, they walked into the section of the restaurant previously reserved for white officers, demanded service and got it. Despite immediate reaction on the part of some of the white officers, Col. Noel Parrish, commanding officer of the field, has upheld the action forced by the Negro officers.

Three days later Colonel Parrish called a meeting of the entire officer personnel of the field. It is reported that at this time he read the War department directive, which appeared on the post bulletin boards the same morning, and pointed out that although he knew that many of the white officers did not like it, there was nothing he could do about it.

DIRECTIVE ORDERS END POST SEGREGATION 8-19-44

The War department directive dated July 18, ends segregation in three phases of U. S. Army camp life. It directs that:

1. No theatre or performance may hereafter deny admittance to a member of the armed forces because of race. 8-19-44
2. All races will be permitted to use army post exchanges without segregation.
3. U. S. buses and trucks or those owned and operated by the U. S. or the Army or other U. S. agency may not refuse colored passengers, or jim crow them to certain seats.

When the Negro officer leading the group entered the lily-white section of the Tuskegee post restaurant, a white lieutenant stopped him and told him it was against the post rules to serve the colored men in that section. The Negro officer politely informed the white lieutenant of the recent directive, quoted the army regulation covering the directive and continued into the room for service.

WHITE OFFICERS SEEK TRANSFER

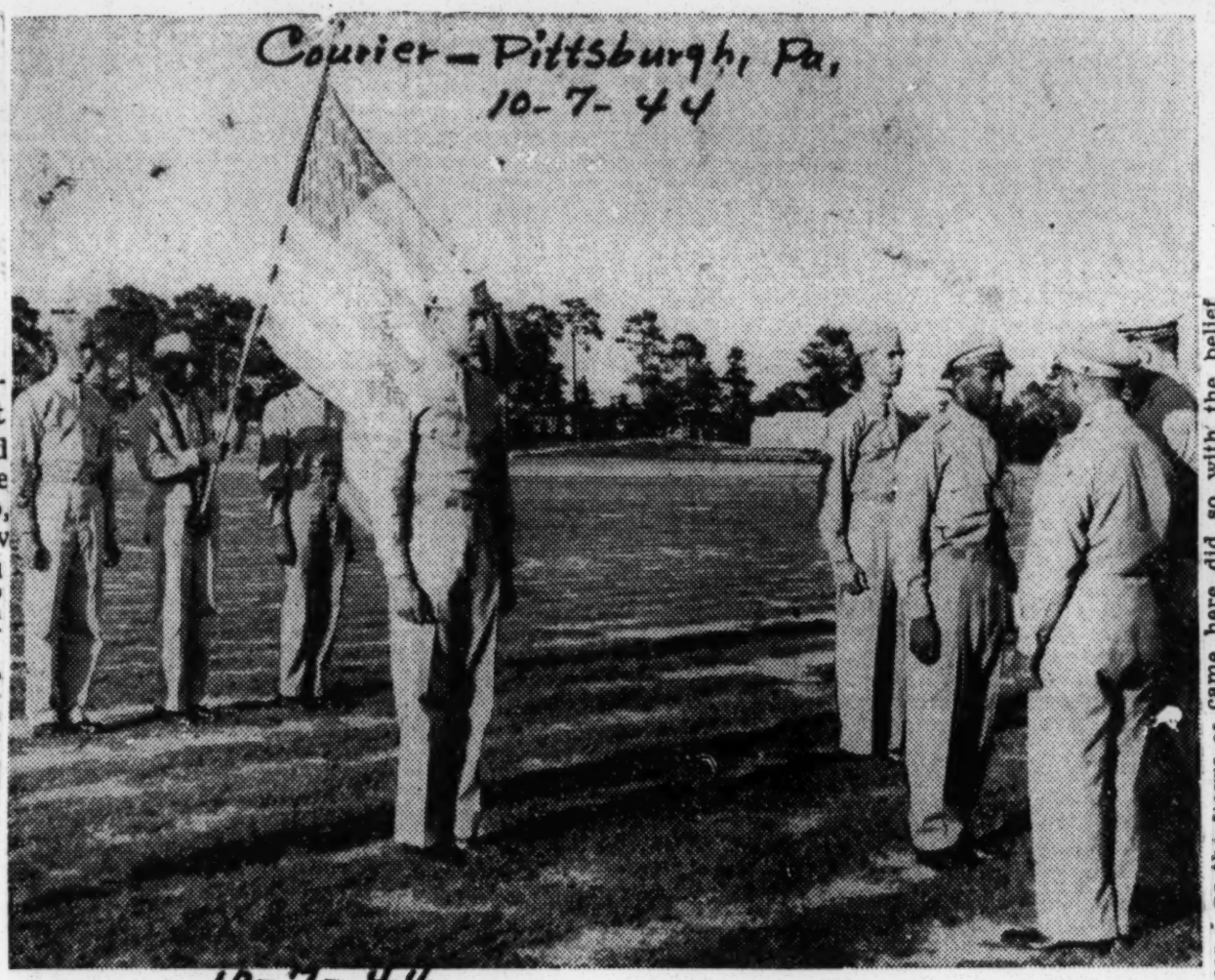
For some time Negro officers of the post had heard of the existence of such a directive but had not seen such a notice on any of the bulletin boards. Finally through undisclosed means the officers came across a copy of the directive and decided to take action. 8-19-44

Several of the white officers among them some of the key officers of the post, walked out of the room when the Negro officers came in to eat. Other whites evidently showing their approval of the directive, went one step further and had their meals in the section generally set aside for the Negro officers.

Colonel Parrish, in speaking to the officers, is reported as offering a transfer to white officers who expressed a desire to leave because of the order and indicated that some of the key white officers had expressed such a wish. This desire on the part of some of the white officers to be transferred opens once again one of the sore spots in the three-year-old administration of the field.

ONLY ONE NEGRO IN KEY POSITION 8-19-44

When the Tuskegee Army Air Field was initiated it was concluded that it would be entirely staffed by Negro personnel. Nothwithstanding the fact that many qualified Negroes have actually been assigned to the field, none of them has as yet been placed in key positions except possibly Major Webb, the Provost Marshall. Even his office has for an overseer a captain commissioned from civilian duties with the Alabama State police.



Courier—Pittsburgh, Pa.
10-7-44

10-7-44

DFC PINNED ON CAPTAIN HALL AT TAAF—Captain Charles B. Hall, of Brazil, Ind., recently returned from Italy, where he was the first Negro pilot to shoot down a German plane, has been awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross. The award was made by Col. Noel F. Parrish, commandinug officer of Tuskegee Army Air Field. Captain Hall is standing at right, facing Lieut. Col. George McDonald and Colonel Parrish. Standing behind Captain Hall is Second Lieut. Orville Lewis, who read the presentation speech. In front of flag is Second Lieut. Wesley Johnson, officer of the day. Color guard is pictured at extreme left.—AAF photo.

INSIDE TUSKEGEE

NONE OF WHITE PERSONNEL LIVES ON POST OR BELONGS TO THE OFFICERS' CLUB

Courier—Pittsburgh, Pa.

By JACK DAY, Special Correspondent

(Fourth In a Series) 10-7-44

THE Tuskegee Army Air Field stands as a citadel of refutation to the theory that there can be segregation without discrimination. Whatever else the War Department hoped to prove by the building of these separate facilities, it has shown a miserable failure on this one most important point. First, notwithstanding Army regulations and directives, this field today, after three years, is in the hands of a group of white officers whose chief aim is to advance themselves without regard to the damage done to the general morale of Negro Army personnel. Second, the major objective of the field—to teach men to fly—has been clouded with far too many issues involving compromises and special adjustments designed to solve the social issues of race. 10-7-44

The first hint that this field would be a great problem of morale was experienced when stories concerning the activities here spread like wildfire over the Nation. There was the story that Negroes were being taught to fly in obsolete aircraft. There were tales of "tinkering" with engines to make them fail while Negro cadets were flying. These stories and tales, as far as this writer has been able to learn, were not true. Nevertheless, the very fact that Negroes were bunched together at this field made these untruths sound plausible; especially since Negroes knew that other irregularities were prevalent here.

CADETS TRAINED UNDER TENSION

After this episode of stories the field was off to a bad start. Beset as it was with almost insurmountable barriers, this experiment might have reached some strata of success had it not been for the growth here of a dynasty of white officers who took advantage of the situation and continued the attack on the Negro's morale by subjugating and browbeating the Negro personnel of this field into submission This last act proved to be "the straw that broke the camel's back."

Turning to the Negro cadet, this writer considers his morale of paramount importance. He is, after all, the proving ground of the "experiment." 10-7-44

The lot of the Negro cadet under this set-up has been twice as hard as that of the white cadet. Because of the War Department's announcement that this training was an experiment, the Negro cadet came here under the impression that he carried the weight of the responsibility of the Negro people on his shoulders. His was a spirit of "I must. I must. I must." A Negro flight instructor here told me that this situation created a tension on the part of Negro cadets which is detrimental to anyone undergoing competitive flight training. (This will be a vital point for the refutation of the argument that Negroes do not make good military pilots because of the great number who failed to make the grade.) This tenseness was not relieved at this field because white officers, sitting like judges on the benches of their offices of prestige and responsibility, lost no opportunity to point out the Negro cadet's every failure as an individual, but as a member of a particular race.

NOVEL THEORIES PRODUCED

It is believed that nothing could have eased that tension more than a spirit of tolerance in which an all-Negro staff held the key offices of the field. The fact that white officers were making a point would, they couldn't forget the many injustices one the Negro officers did so with the belief that they were here to chart a new method by which a strange and peculiar people could be taught to make themselves believe all men are necessary to endure all the ideas of their own as to how the fly Army planes. They had many mechanery to prove their "experiment" should proceed. At fight in the air to save first there was such silly talk that try. These men gave up Negroes would make better night and quit. promise and special ad-pilots because they could see beforeit began when the War Department declared this field an ex-theory that Negroes were showoffs This promise created and individualists and would not operation which created perform as a team and therefore unity for the failure to had to be severely disciplined at the slightest infraction of the rules. Such warped theories on the part of the whole idea of inferiority; couldn't forget that Negroes were here to chart a new method by which a strange and peculiar people could be taught to fly Army planes. They had many ideas of their own as to how the first there was such silly talk that Negroes would make better night pilots because they could see beforeit began when the War Department declared this field an ex-theory that Negroes were showoffs This promise created and individualists and would not operation which created perform as a team and therefore unity for the failure to had to be severely disciplined at the slightest infraction of the rules. Such warped theories on the part of the whole idea of inferiority; couldn't make that it was necessary to endure all the attempt of this chicanery to prove their ability to fight in the air to save their country. These men gave up and quit. Negroes do not make good military pilots because they could see beforeit began when the War Department declared this field an ex-theory that Negroes were showoffs This promise created and individualists and would not operation which created perform as a team and therefore unity for the failure to had to be severely disciplined at the slightest infraction of the rules. Those white officers who are making a point would, they couldn't forget the many injustices of the field; couldn't forget that they were here to chart a new method by which a strange and peculiar people could be taught to make themselves believe all men are necessary to endure all the ideas of their own as to how the fly Army planes. They had many mechanery to prove their "experiment" should proceed. At fight in the air to save first there was such silly talk that try. These men gave up Negroes would make better night and quit. promise and special ad-

of the men who were to teach Negro cadets to fly, precluded any possibility of an unbiased inspection of the ability of these cadets.

WHITE PERSONNEL LIVES OFF POST

The field itself was a special adjustment which created the hidden suggestion that the Negro's courage was in question. Somehow, cadets here always came back to the question: "Do they think that the Negro youth are cowards and afraid to fight?" 10-7-44

"I was more sure of that," remarked a returned Negro combat pilot, "when we reached the combat area. It is no secret that we were not wanted. I felt that it was because there was a belief that there was something strange and different about us; we were not the real McCoy. It is my belief that the other commanders and pilots felt that the experiment was being continued and they didn't feel that they could rely upon us."

No one can blame these commanders and pilots for this attitude. The War Department had implied from the beginning that the Negro's courage as well as his ability was in question. If not, why an experiment?

Another special adjustment has had a decided effect on the morale of Negro troops here at TAAF. There has been discrimination in the assignment of quarters for single white enlisted men and officers. There is an Army regulation which says that single enlisted men and officers may live OFF THE POST only at the discretion of the COMMANDING OFFICER. As a general rule at ALL Army posts, it is a rare case when a single enlisted man or officer is given the privilege of living off the post. Well, here at this field there is NOT ONE SINGLE WHITE ENLISTED MAN OR OFFICER WHO LIVES ON THE POST and THERE IS NOT ONE SINGLE NEGRO ENLISTED MAN OR OFFICER WHO LIVES OFF THE POST.

SPECIAL ADVANTAGES

What are the results of such an arrangement? First, these white single enlisted men and officers reap a pecuniary gain denied Negroes. (Army personnel authorized to live off their post are paid an additional amount to compensate for living quarters. This amount is usually more than required to rent living quarters.) Second, these white enlisted men and officers are allowed to live in the preferred comforts of a civilian community while Negroes are forced to live Army style. 10-7-44

The effect of these two results is that Negroes here are forced to deduce that these are special privileges set aside for whites. One Negro put it this way:

"Every morning there is a long line of automobiles bringing the white lords to this plantation. All day long they shove us around and run the field. Late in the afternoon there is another long line of automobiles carrying the white lords away. Their day's work is done."

NO WHITE OFFICER BELONGS TO CLUB

The fact that no white enlisted man or officer lives on the post here may be a deciding factor in dividing the personnel of this field into two opposing factions — Negroes and whites. Neither faction has been given the opportunity to know and understand the problems of the other; or to share those activities of the field which ordinarily build unit pride, loyalty and a feeling of oneness. For instance, NO WHITE OFFICER BELONGS TO THE OFFICERS' CLUB HERE.

Everyone knows that on an Army post ALL officers are requested to support the Officers' club. Well, here at Tuskegee there is a different story. Here THE COMMANDING OFFICER DOES NOT BELONG TO THE OFFICERS' CLUB. It is said that Colonel Parish told white officers that they could join the Officers' club if they wished. However, after making this characteristic gesture, HE refused to join. He knew that no white officer would "insult" him by accepting a membership he, the commanding officer, had turned down. Negroes here would like readers to inform them if they know of any other field of this size in the whole Army Air Forces where the commanding officer not only DOES NOT LIVE ON THE POST, but DOES NOT EVEN BELONG TO THE OFFICERS' CLUB.

General Lauds Tuskegee VD Control Setup

Tribune — Philadelphia Pa.
10-14-44

TUSKEGEE ARMY AIR FIELD Ala., Oct.—In a recent communique, Gen. H. H Arnold. Commanding General of the U. S. Army Air Forces, commended the officers and enlisted men of the highly rated venereal disease control school at the Tuskegee Army Air Field for their outstanding accomplishments in the Venereal Disease Control Program of the AAF.

The commendation, read: "For exceptional proficiency in the development and execution of the training course in venereal disease control for non-commissioned officers conducted at the Tuskegee Army Air Field from May 1943 to July 1944."

General Arnold stressed the enthusiasm, ingenuity and fine spirit with which this work was accomplished and said that it has become an excellent example and inspiration to military organizations throughout the AAF which are faced with the problem of controlling venereal disease.

The non-commissioned officers trained at Tuskegee have functioned in units of the AAF both in the Zone of Interior and in theatres of operation. 10-14-44

The officers and enlisted men sharing in the honor of this official commendation are: Col. Richard C. Cumming, Ocala, Fla., Post Surgeon; Lt. Col. George McDonald, Washington D. C., Post Venereal Disease Control Officer; Capt. Elbert B. Singleton Norfolk, Va., assistant to the VD control officer; S.Sgts Alpheus C. Duval, Los Angeles, Cal.; and Victor H. Hodges, Tulsea, Okla.

TAAF Single Engine Graduates

Tribune — Philadelphia, Pa. 10-28-44

10-28-44

The current class of aviation cadets who received their wings and commissions Monday at the Post Chapel of the Tuskegee Army Air Field, Alabama, was described by Col. Noel F. Parrish, Commanding Officer, as the second largest and most impressive in the history of the field. In an address to the class, Capt. Charles B. Hall, famous pilot of the 99th Fighter Squadron, stressed the importance of teamwork and alertness. 10-28-44

Pictured above, l. to r., 1st row are: Lt. Rutherford H. Adkins, Alexandria, Va.; F/O Thomas J. Daniels III, Wetumpka, Ala.; Lt. Ferrier H. White, Oberlin, Ohio; Lt. Charles P. Myers, Indianapolis, Ind.; and Lt. Edward D. Doram, Cincinnati, Ohio.

Second row, left to right, Lt. Henry A. Hunter, Williamsport, Pa.; Lt. Charles L. Stovall, Wichita, Kansas; F/O Robert M. Glass, Pittsburgh, Pa.; Lt. James H. Harvey, Jr., Mountain Top, Pa.; Lt. Richard G. Stevens, Washington, D. C.; and Lt. Cornelius D. Dowling, New Rochelle, N. Y. 10-28-44

Back row, left to right: Lt. Richard E. Thorpe, Brooklyn, N. Y.; Lt. Charles E. Miller, Plainfield, N. J.; Lt. Joseph H. Millett, Los Angeles, Calif.; Lt. DONALD N. THOMPSON, Philadelphia, Pa.; F/O Frank A. Jackson, Jr., Youngstown, Ohio; Lt. Allen H. Turner, Flint, Mich. Lt. Theodore W. Lancaster, Rochester, N. Y.; Lt. Richard A. Simons, White Plains, N. Y.; and F/O James W. Warren, Brooklyn, N. Y. — (Official U. S. AAF Photo by AAF Training Command)

Tuskegee Pilot Crash Fatality

Daily World — Atlanta Ga.
10-7-44

TUSKEGEE ARMY AIR FIELD, Ala. — (SNS) — Aviation Cadet Raymond C. McEwen, a graduate of Dusable High School, Chicago, Ill., and a former student of Fisk University and the University of Minnesota, was killed instantly Thursday when the plane in which he was making a routine training flight crashed near this field.

A board of qualified Army Air Force officers has been appointed to investigate and determine the exact cause of the accident. Cadet McEwen, a future fighter pilot trainee at this station, was entering the advanced phase of his training. He is the son of Mrs. Ethel McEwen, of 2939 Vincennes Avenue, Chicago.

Chicago Cadet Fatally Hurt In Plane Crash

Tribune — Philadelphia Pa.
10-14-44

TUSKEGEE ARMY AIR FIELD, Ala.—Aviation Cadet Raymond C. McEwen, a graduate of DuSable High School, Chicago, Ill., and a former student of Fisk University and the University of Minnesota, was killed instantly when the plane in which he was making a routine training flight crashed near the Tuskegee Army Air Field on October 5. A board of qualified Army Air Force officers has been appointed to investigate and determine the exact cause of the accident.

A/C McEwen, a future fighter pilot trainee at this station, was entering the advanced phase of his training. He is the son of Mrs. Ethel McEwen of 2939 Vincennes avenue, Chicago, Illinois.

B-29 Superfortress Bases Built by Colored Engineers

Tribune — Philadelphia, Pa. 7-15-44

HEADQUARTERS, XX BOMBER COMMAND, Somewhere in India — Twenty-three thousand cubic yards of concrete poured into a parking apron for B-29 Superfortresses in a single month — this is the achievement of a battalion of colored U.S. Army Engineers, a unit that made its contribution to our aerial offensive against Japan.

When the Bomber Command began establishing bases here for its huge bombers, it called to aid it the undertaking a separate specialists in many types of engineers, which had been working for six months on "impossible" assignments. But during their service on the Ledo Road and turned a rice paddy field into one of the first emergency landing fields in that area.

Composed of colored soldiers, they "took on the chin" the many Southern States, fold problems involved. Activated in October, 1942, at Fort Knox, Ky., the battalion unknown simply as overseas service derwent training there until sent overseas. On arriving in the China-Burma-India Theatre of Operations, they went to work on the "labor battalion." But during their service on the "hard muscle" tasks. "Laborers" Become Experts

Between India and China.

47a-1944

SCORE FIRST VICTORIES FOR NEGRO FIGHTER GROUP IN ITALY

Age — New York, N.Y. 6-24-44

6-24-44 6-24-44

These daring young P-47 Thunderbolt pilots scored the first victories in the air for the all-Negro fighter group now operating in Italy under the command of Colonel Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., when they brought down five Nazi ME-109 planes on June 9, in the Udine area in northeastern Italy. Left to right: Second Lieutenant Frederick A. Funderburg, of Philadelphia, Pa., credited with two planes; First Lieutenant Wendell O. Pruitt, of St. Louis, Mo., one plane; First Lieutenant Melvin T. Jackson, of Warrenton, Va., one plane; First Lieutenant Charles M. Bussey, of Los Angeles, Calif., shared one plane with Second Lieutenant Willie W. Green, of Staunton, Va. (Photos by U. S. Army Air Forces.)

99th Shot Down 17 Axis Planes, Scored 3 Probables

Tribune — Washington, D.C.

6-10-44

The famed all-Negro 99th Fighter Squadron has flown 3,000 combat sorties since it went into action in North Africa a year ago, shot down seventeen enemy planes, scored three probables, and damaged six other planes, up to April 11, when he left Italy, Maj. George Spencer Roberts, 25, commanding officer of the unit who is now back in the States, reported at a news conference here last week.

Capt. Charles B. Hall, Brazil, Ind., is present high scorer for the squadron, Major Roberts said, with three enemy planes to his credit.

The squadron is now doing close support of Allied ground forces in Italy, he said, but the outfit has flown all types of combat missions—bomber, escort, dive bombing, patrol for beachheads, and strafing.

3 Missing, 2 Killed

Only about 20 per cent of the original outfit are said to be in the 99th at present. Three planes and pilots are missing, two men have been killed, and one is believed to be a prisoner.

Some of the men have been grounded because of flier's fatigue and others sent back to the States to be instructors.

The officer expressed himself as satisfied with the "close support" assignment, using the rugged P-40's the squadron has had since entering combat. The 99th has used the P-40's for every possible type of fighter operations.

6-10-44

Major Roberts said he thought the German pilots now are not as experienced as those met a year ago, but that the ones you do meet require all your attention.

Major Roberts, whose home is Fairmont, W. Va., was commissioned at Tuskegee in March 1942, and went overseas in April of 1943. He assumed command of the 99th in September, 1943, and was promoted to the rank of major last December.

His Ship Hit 73 Times

Major Roberts wears the Air Medal with two Oak Leaf clusters, earned in 78 missions in which his ship was hit 73 times, though he was never injured.

Training of the 99th approximated that of other units, he said, declaring with emphasis:

"There was no racial angle. Other outfits got their training and we got ours. They moved up into combat and we moved up."

6-10-44

He also stated that on several occasions his pilots had flown with white pilots.

Deny Colored Officers To Run Tuskegee Field

Defender — Chicago, Ill.

10-7-44

By VENICE T. SPRAGGS
(Defender Staff Correspondent)

TUSKEGEE, Ala. — The current rumor that the Tuskegee Army Air Field will be turned over to entire Negro administrative personnel was denied last week by Post Commander Col. Noel F. Parrish, who said in an interview here that he had no knowledge of such a plan. He asserted, however, that white officers would have no opposition to the move.

The rumor had its inception, some believe, in the report that Col. Benjamin O. Davis Jr., is expected to return to the country shortly from the European theater where he has been in command of the 332nd Fighter Group. Added to this has also been the unconfirmed allegation that many white officers have threatened to seek transfer from the post because of the Army's recent non-segregation ban.

Commenting on the persistent rumors, Col. Parrish said, admittedly Col. Davis has the necessary qualifications to take over the field—qualifications which surpassed his. "A combat officer's position," he said, "is far more important than that of running a training school.

adverse reaction to the order out of a total of more than 100 white officers."

10-7-44

Segregation Seen Impossible

When asked to comment on Alabama Governor Chauncey Sparks' request to the President to have the order rescinded, stating that he agreed that Negro soldiers should have equality of facilities but that there should be segregation, Parrish said, "Complete segregation within any functioning military unit which includes both white and Negro personnel is practically impossible."

He said there was nothing new in the order, that it was instructions from the Inspector General to in-

terpret previous directives in a strict manner. The order had been brought to his attention by one of the Negro officers at the field, he admitted. The officer had learned of it from outside sources.

While it was apparent that the General Office had known of its existence for some time, it had kept as closed-mouthed as a clam on the subject with the hope that it would not be discovered. A Negro officer from TAAF advised men at Max-

well Field in Montgomery of its existence. It was then that Gov. Sparks discovered the "evils" of the order and forwarded his complaint to the President.

Parrish said there had been no obvious change in morale at the station since the order had been in force. This is understandable since the field is predominantly Negro with the exception of white officers and a few white en-

listed men who generally find their recreation in the nearby town.

Purpose to Train Pilots

Tuskegee Army Air Field was set up with one specific purpose, the commanding officer said, to train Negro pilots. "No one can deny that we have done a good job in that regard," he said. "The field," he continued, "is the only training school to put its entire production into combat during the first year and a half. We are continuing to send our whole production into combat," he said. 10-7-44

From the time he came to TAAF as instructor in the first primary school, Col. Parrish said he had never considered it an experiment and that it had been conducted in the standard manner. As recent as September 11 of this year, the post was rated Excellent by Maxwell Field during Wing Inspection.

Whether the Army installation can weather a complete change in personnel at this time in a section steeped with a tradition of prejudice has given rise to much conjecture.

Many say it can survive, and point to the Veterns' Administrative Facility at Tuskegee which stands as a monument of efficient Negro administration in spite of the Ku Klux Klan and other "white supremacy" elements which confronted it. A few speak of the difficulty of securing sufficient Negro personnel adequately trained in the many areas of operation and administration at the field, in view of the limited experience in these areas which has been accorded Negroes generally in both military and civilian life.

These say, however, that you could comb every Army installation in the country and find such men. Still another few say that the desirable state is to maintain an integrated post where Negro officers will have the same opportunity to advance as whites with demonstrated ability used as a basis for such promotions. 10-7-44

Negroes Promoted Slowly

Often referred to as the "enlisted man's man," the commanding officer pointed to the growth of the field over a period of our years now at approximately 2400 men with about 300 Negro officers and 100 white. Between 50 and 100 of the Negroes are senior officers. Th' small number is due, Parrish s to the lack of military backgr and a lack of business and mana ment experience in civilian life.

Some Negro officers at the installation say it is due to the slow rate of promotion of Negro officers. It is understood that there is a strong resistance in the Air Training Command General office to moving Negro men up in rank based on the contention that the higher they rise the more trouble they cause by contending for more recognition. This obviously vicious attitude is recognized by many of the officers and is the seat of considerable unrest and discontent. The commanding officer initiates and follows through on each promotion.

It is believed that many of the officers at the station are qualified for positions they do not now hold. Many have had the advantage of training in Special Service schools. But the vicious circle in which experience in a given field is placed above training, puts the Negro officer in the position of seldom having seniority of experience over that of a white officer, thus seldom getting the top positions. 10-7-44

Therefore, no opportunity to gain experience. Ironically, TAAF is the only air base in which Negroes could rise to such positions as against hundreds for whites.

Reiterating that the purpose of the station is to train combat pilots Col. Parrish said that: "Obviously you can't take time out from the job to train Negro officers that they may be elevated to positions of administration on th post."

The larger number of TAAF graduates are sent to Walterboro S. C., as individual replacements for the 332nd. Others are given twin-engine training and are sent to Godman Field, Kentucky with the 447th.

Douglas Air Field, Arizona, serves as the transition training field in B-25s prior to pilots going to Godman Field. 10-7-44

At present there are eight returned combat officers from the European theatre. They are assigned as follows: Capt. Charles B. Hall, instructor; Capt. Clarence Jamison, twin-engine instructor; Capt. James T. Wiley, administrative instructor; Capt. Lemuel R. Custis, assistant operations officer; Lt. Willie H. Fuller, single-engine instructor; Lt. James B. Knighter, assistant engineering officer; Lt. Allen B. Lane assistant P-40 transition instructor and Lt. George R. Bolling, new and unassigned.

Plunges Truck Into River To Protect Convoy

Journal + Guide Norfolk, Va.

Soldier Proves Hero By Quick Action In India Theatre

9-23-44

HEADQUARTERS, CHINA-BURMA-INDIA THEATER OF OPERATIONS — Somewhere in India behind the lines of combat evolves the heroic story of Technician Fifth Grade Milton Groves of De Ridder, La.

Groves was driving his truck in convoy to a new camp site. The sound of laboring motors filled the air with a deep-threated protest against the hilly terrain of the Indian countryside. Inside some of these trucks were the men of Company "A" talking.

Suddenly, high tongues of flames shot skyward. One of the trucks was afire — Groves' truck. It happened so fast that no one was forewarned and no warning could be given.

As the flames spread toward the cab of his truck, Groves and his companion, Technician Fifth Grade Joseph Kearney, a cook, didn't appear to have a chance.

HEROISM APPARENT

Then abruptly, the huge vehicle bounded out of the line and headed toward the steep embankment of a nearby river. A human body shot out of the flame-covered cab and the vehicles plunged over the embankment and into the water.

The convoy stopped; and, as one, the occupants rushed forward hoping they weren't too late to help but fearing all they could do would be to retrieve the bodies. 9-23-44

When they reached the embankment they found Kearney a bit shaken and with nothing but a few scratches to show for his harrowing experience.

SAVED TRUCK

Their hopes rose as they climbed down the embankment after Groves. He, too, was safe.

It was then that they were struck by the realization of Groves' heroic action. He had deliberately plunged the truck into the river to prevent it from endangering their lives and to save it from complete destruction. Technician Fifth Grade Groves is the son of Mrs. Alma Groves of De Ridder. He is 22-years-old and has been in the Army for 23 months, 4 months of which have been in the China-Burma-India Theater of Operations.

Col. Davis' Pilots in Victory

Call — Kansas City, Mo.

St. Louis Lad Credited With Hitting One

6-16-44

By ART CARTER
(War Correspondent in Italy)

ADVANCED ALLIED AIR BASE IN ITALY.—The fighter pilot group commanded by Col. Benjamin O. Davis Jr., shot down five Nazi planes Friday, June 9, and seriously damaged a sixth in fierce fighting over enemy-held northern Italy. 2nd Lt. Frederick Funderburg of Philadelphia shot down two planes.

St. Louisan Bags One

Lt. Wendell O. Pruitt, 4569 Garfield Ave., St. Louis, was credited with one plane. Other pilots credited with one plane each are Lts. Charles M. Bussey of Los Angeles and Melvin T. Jackson of Warrentown, Va. Lt. William Green of Staunton, Va., was credited with help on the plane Bussey downed. 6-16-44

Lt. Robert H. Wiggins of Brooklyn, N. Y., was credited with damaging an enemy plane. Several others in the group, including Col. Davis, fired on an estimated 30 Nazi ME 109's which attacked a B-24 bomber formation the group was escorting.

Col. Davis and his pilots were flying in Thunderbolts. A number of their planes were hit by flak. One failed to return due to engine trouble but the pilot is believed to be safe.

Details of the flight are not permitted at this time because of army security regulations.

On Thursday, June 8, the day before the five Nazi planes were downed, Col. Davis's group received this commendation from the Bomber Wing in this area, "Your formation flying and escort is the best we have ever seen." 6-16-44

Joyous Over Victory

The returning victorious pilots did victory rolls over the group's field and landed amid high enthusiasm. Everybody was shouting and grinning happily with much handshaking and backslapping.

Some idea of the intensity of the fight which was carried on at an altitude of around 15,000 feet in the midst of heavy flak is given in the account of Lt. Jackson.

"An ME 109 came in on my tail," he said. "I dive-stalled and gave water boost to my plane to climb and again the ME 109 came out of the clouds behind me. A dogfight ensued until I shot the ME 109 down. Metal flew off his left side as his door came off. The Nazi pilot bailed out over a German airfield. I hit deck and came home. Flak was everywhere. 6-16-44

Lt. Funderburg, who shot down two planes, said that he had just shot down one enemy plane which came in on his left wing when another came at him from the right front. He maneuvered for position, shot and saw the second plane come down in flames.

Recently Commissioned Second Lieutenants

Amsterdam News — New York, N. Y.

4-8-44

THEY HAVE WINGS—Now! The following (above l. to r.) were recently awarded their "Wings" and commissioned Second Lieutenants from the Aviation Cadet Corps at the Tuskegee Army Air Field; Elton H. Nightingale, of 132 W. 112th St., NYC.; Herbert H. Heywood, Harlemite via Christiansted, St. Croix, Virgin Islands; Jesse J. Cahmplon, Jr., of New Rochelle, N. Y., and Vincent C. Dean of Corona, N. Y.

47a-1944

Airmen Promoted To Captaincy; Memory of One Honored

Journal & Guide - Norfolk, Va.
2-19-44

FIRST LT. PAUL MITCHELL

CAPTS. BERNARD S. PROCTOR (left) and HENRY M. LETCHER

CAPT. CORNELIUS VINCENT

Lt. Michell is the first pilot in the 99th officially reported killed in action, although two others were previously reported missing. The housing project at the Tuskegee Army Air Field will be named Mitchell Village in his honor.

Mitchell gained a B.S. degree in structural engineering in 1941 from Hampton Institute and was working as a draftsman with a Washington architect when he was drafted. Later he was assigned to the Air Corps. 2-19-44

A native of Washington, he had flown in the CPT course at Hampton. He is survived by his mother, Mrs. Pauline G. Mitchell, 908 Howard Road, S.E., Washington.

Three first lieutenants in the ground staff were recently made captains. Capt. Proctor, of Glen Olden, Penna., was mess officer when the unit went overseas. Later he was made adjutant. His wife lives in Philadelphia while he is abroad. He is a Wilberforce graduate and former star athlete.

Capt. Letcher finished Howard University arts course and then studied ceramics at Ohio State University. He taught industrial arts in the Washington vocational schools before going in the Army. He was transportation officer when the squadron went overseas, and was made executive when that position was created by a new table of organization last July. His wife and baby live in Washington. 2-19-44

Capt. Vincent, a Bostonian, is intelligence officer. He was trained for his post at the Air Corps administrative school in Miami Beach. He had a private pilot's license when he was in Boston College, but washed out as a cadet.

Vincent took a light fling at politics in 1940 while still an undergraduate. He ran for the Boston city council and conducted a vigorous campaign. It was unsuccessful. But Vincent insists it was great fun.

He is married to the former Bonnie Amena of Miami, Fla., who now teaches at Bethune-Cookman College. They married January 24, 1943.

(All photos by Thomas W. Young, Guide War Correspondent.)

COLORED AIR PILOTS NOW CARRY FIGHT BACK TO MUSSOLINI

The Guardian - Boston, Mass.

ETHIOPIA KING'S DIRE WARNINGS NO LONGER A JOKE TO AXIS

By Mabe Kountze

Recent success of colored air pilots near Rome recalls the sharp contrast back in October 1935 when Benito Mussolini, "the modern Caesar of Caesars," dispatched fleets of bombers from Imperial Rome to blast daylights out of helpless African natives. Mussolini laughed, then, at the pitiful "Ethiopian Air Force" led by two Americans, New York's publicized "Black Eagle," Colonel Julian, and Chicago's "Brown Condor," Col. John Robinson, both volunteers. 2-19-44

"BLACK EAGLES" RETURN

A little Ethiopian king pleaded with the world to stop the fascist forces, and (when nobody listened), he then warned that a major conflict would result and eventually "Ethiopia would be avenged." That was nine years ago. The cynics laughed at Selassi. They forgot God's Power.

In April of 1943 2-19-44 eight years after the "Roman conquest of Ethiopia," a remarkable incident occurred, one of the most dramatic of this war, when 27 colored air pilots, plus an efficient ground crew, both comprising the 99th Fighter Squadron sailed aboard a troopship from New York and quietly put into port at colorful Casablanca, African French Morocco. The "Black Eagles" had returned for the second, perhaps final round. At the town of Fez, not far from Casablanca, the interational stage celebrity, Josephine Baker, a refuge from fallen France, was on hand to greet her fellow-Americans and to encourage them with song and dance. Ever serious and looking eagerly toward the war horizon was the youthful 99th squadron commander, West Point graduate, Lt.-Col. Benjamin O. Davs Jr. Was Haile Selassi a prophet? Had the "Lion of Judah's" prayers been answered? Had Col. Julian and Col. Robinson paved the way after all?

WINGS OVER ITALY

When Colonel Philip Cochran, the symbolized "Flip Corkin" in the cartoon strip "Terry and the Pirates," finally polished off the rough spots of the 99th by the end of May, 1943, training in Africa, the pilots had more than perhaps one of the bloodiest battles of the war, brought the 99th into the strong spotlight-princi- because the precarious Allied toehold on the beach the first two weeks of February, 1944, required bout everything the Allies could find available to gainst the savage German counter offensive. Allied l troops were saved often by big naval guns off the and fierce bombing and strafing support from the In this action, the 99th Fighter Squadron was hurto the fray and in the first week downed at least is planes and performed some of the finest flying s of the war. This phase of the story is not yet ete. More history will be made.

SPANISH FLYING ACE

1939, five years ago, it was this writer's pleasure hange aviation columns with Ben Hunton, then the n editor of the Washington Tribune. Ben, at that said that in 36 years of heavier-than-air-flying there housands of white pilots but the colored citizenry ss than 150 licensed pilots to its credit. There were

AID ANZIO INVASION

The American invasion bridgehead at Anzio, south of

few colored mail pilots. In 1938, a daring brownskin aviatrix, Miss Willa Brown of Chicago, was the rage as a stunt performer. Jimmy Peck, a daring flying lieutenant in the Spanish Loyalist Air Force, author of two leading aviation books, along with Ethiopian war hero, Colonel Robinson and Colonel Julian, were vainly trying to drum up interest in race aviators (Peck is now a Merchant Marine sailor) and several race aviation clubs throughout the country were flooding Washington with offers to serve many long years ago. It's been a long uphill crusade. Colored military aviation was born of a constant struggle, a militant press and even a resignation of a Civilian War Aid, the heroic and Hon. Judge William H. Hastie who did not resign in vain. 3-19-44

"99TH" WINS DEBATE

The 99th Fighter Squadron is the first American colored flying unit to see action in a war engaged in by U. S. armed forces. Colored pilots as aforementioned, have performed for other countries, especially France and the British Empire, Spain, and Ethiopia. The 99th was an unattached experiment. Many "experts" expected the experiment to fail. Had that happened, colored airmen would be confined to ground crews only. The 99th was therefore on the spot, under terrific pressure. It made some mistakes. But it finally won the raging debate. It is now reportedly attached to the 12th U. S. Air Force, a part of the Mediterranean Allied Air Force under Lt. Gen. Ira C. Eaker and recently was officially commended by Gen. Henry H. "Hap" Arnold, Chief of the U. S. Army Air Force. The U. S. units of the MAAF, are, according to the recent newspaper release, serving with the crack RAF in the Italian war theatre. Considering the time other races have devoted to aviation, the steps made, and those being made, by the colored man are tremendous. There is no denying the fact.

DAVIS PILOTS 332ND

Lt.-Colonel Ben Davis, Jr., the active commander of the "Fighting 99th" until September of 1943, was recalled by the War Department after being awarded the Oak Leaf Cluster that August for more than 20 flying missions over enemy territory. Davis, say reports, will now lead the new 332nd Colored Fighter Group which potentially is even more powerful than the 99th, although it will have to go some to prove it. When young Ben Davis sailed to the wars with the original 99th, it is said he had only 12 regular pilots. In taking over the 332nd, reports indicate Davis will inherit at least three complete modern trained squadrons which comprise the first colored "Fighter Group" in U. S. history, just as the 99th was the first colored squadron. The 332nd was activated at Tuskegee in 1942 but began its real training later at Selfridge Field, Michigan, being the first "northern schooled" race unit. And there are now scattered colored air units which we won't mention here but which are quietly building up a small select pool of replacements, according to some reports. All in all, the outlook of colored participation in military aviation is slow but progressing to the point where even the daily newspapers are becoming aware of our flyers. This is a pretty good indication that eventually the goal will be won. At least these are our humble conclusions after considerable research on the subject.

AIRMAN IS KILLED IN TRAINER CRASH

Age Herald Birmingham, Ala 6-13-44

Cause Of Accident In Shelby Is Being Investigated

The Negro pilot of an Army trainer plane, 2nd Lt. George K. Hays, Army Air Corps, was killed instantly Monday when his one-seater plane crashed about six miles south of Westover, in Shelby County, officials at the Birmingham Army Air Base said.

Lt. Hays, they added, was stationed at the Tuskegee Army Air Base and was making a routine flight from Tuskegee at the time of the accident. His home address was not immediately available.

Officials at the Army Air Base here were notified of the crash by a resident of the Westover section, who said the plane was flying at a low level. The operations officer was dispatched to the scene, and later the pilot's body was brought to Birmingham by a local ambulance. 6-13-44

Cause of the crash was bein investigated.

Negro Air Unit Downs 5 Nazis

World-Telegram New York, N.Y.

By the Associated Press. 6-10-44

ROME, June 10.—The only Negro fighter group in the U. S. Air Force, penetrating ahead of the 15th Air Force bombers bound for Munich yesterday, battled 20 Nazi attackers and sent five of them crashing to the earth, it was disclosed today. 6-10-44

Only one plane in the Negro fighter group was lost. The encounter occurred near Udine in northeastern Italy. The group, commanded by Col. Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., New York City, was flying new Thunderbolts.

The Guardian-Boston, Mass

IN THE SKIES

The exploit of the 99th Squadron in shooting down a dozen German planes would not ordinarily excite any "nine-day wonder." The colored press jubilantly gave the story banner headlines, not, however, because the event in itself deserves spectacular newspaper treatment but rather in a sort of "I told you so" exultation which means to say that color has nothing to do with bravery or skill and that if given the opportunity in any field, Americans of African descent measure up to the best the country produces. And it is the everlasting glory of the nation that it can turn out such fine products. The boys of the cinder paths have made good in the skies. 2-12-44

Artillery, Anti-Aircraft Engineers, Fliers at Anzio

Afro-American Baltimore, Md

By ART CARTER

AFRO War Correspondent with U.S. Troops in Italy

[Copyright. Reproduction in whole or in part expressly forbidden.]

WITH THE FIFTH ARMY, ITALY—(By Cable)—Hundreds of our boys are now in the thick, heavy battling around the Anzio and Nettuno Beachheads, daily and nightly risking their lives.

These frontline units include an engineering company which is charged with the important assignment of laying an airfield landing strip, two detachments from quartermaster trucking battalions, advance echelon of the battalions, all doing yeoman work moving supplies to most needed spots. 2-19-44

Actually they are the lifeline infantry, enduring the same perils of danger that any frontal operating unit does. Their homes are mudfilled foxholes. They snatch their rations between enemy shellfire, which is constant and periodical, also go unshaven for weeks.

"Plenty Hot Here"

Sgt. John Hopkins, Lawside, N.J., member of an engineering outfit, states simply, "It is plenty hot here." That in a nutshell describes the hazardous conditions under which frontline soldiers are performing their assigned tasks.

Six pilots of the 99th Fighter Squadron who escorted Lt. Gen-

18 Trained Bomber Pilots Finish Twin-Engine School With Clean Accident Record

Courier-Pitts burgh, Pa. 2-19-44

MATHER FIELD, Calif.—With the third class already on hand, the second contingent of Negro fliers to attend the Army Air Forces Training Command's twin-engine transition school at Mather Field received their wings at graduation exercises Thursday, February 10, the War Department reported. Comments made by instructors indicated that the aviation group commanded by Lt. Col. Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., fliers were alert, impressive in their knowledge and eager for assignment to a B-25 medium bomber for which they are qualified.

Got 3 German Planes

When fighting now centered around Venafro and Cassino was under way preparatory to the drowning of these highly trained soldiers doing patrol duty over the Selfridge Field, Michigan, where they have had little encountered no enemy opposition. 2-19-44

Men in Escort Group

Those who made the escort trip One of its members, Cpl. James ere Capt. Charles B. Hall, First L. Hawkins, 24, Beauford, N.C. ts. James T. Wiley, Herbert E was recently awarded the Sol- arter, Willich Fuller, James Bdiers' Medal for heroism for sav nighten, Prices Rice, the latteing the life of a comrade trapped Montchair, N.J. in a dangerous undertow. The ci Meanwhile, on the other Italiartation asserted Hawkins risked his nt, members of a crack coasown life to reach the drowning illery unit frequently cited byman, remained with him until a n. Clark for exceptional bravditional help arrived. and courageous work, is wait The aviation group commanded with itchy fingers, guns oiled by Lt. Col. Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., fliers were alert, impressive in their sed for action. This anti-aircraft handled its first assignment this week with the squadron headed fit is defending important trans- eager for assignment to a B-25 tation bottlenecks in forward- by Capt. Robert Tresville of Phil- medium bomber for which they as. adelphia doing coastal patrol du are qualified.

Got 3 German Planes

When fighting now centered around Venafro and Cassino was under way preparatory to these highly trained soldiers doing patrol duty over the Selfridge Field, Michigan, where ed three German planes with- zion and Ettuno beaches, but has clean accident record and an en- r ack-ack fire, but in the last ment group. They left behind a weeks they have had little encountered no enemy opposition. 2-19-44 in mainten- on merely because the enemy ance.

REPORT TO SELFRIDGE FIELD

The pilots have been ordered to Selfridge Field, Michigan, where they will join a medium bombardment group. They left behind a clean accident record and an enviable performance in maintenance.

The 18 graduates are Capt. G. Jones, Denver, Colo.; S. Lynn, Ja- maica, N. Y.; W. D. Wells, Wash- Knox, Indianapolis, Ind.; Firstington, D. C.; J. D. Whiten, New E. M. Kennedy, Detroit, Mich.; York, N. Y., and Flight Officer A. F. Newsum, Brooklyn, N. Y.; A. Rogers, Tuskegee Institute, Ala. Second Lts. S. A. Black, Plainfield, L. Harrison, Omaha, Neb.; H. P. N. J.; H. S. Brazil, Joplin, Mo.; Hervey, Jr., Chicago, Ill.; R. B. W. L. Byrd, Fayetteville, N. C.; E. Highbaugh, Indianapolis, Ind.; H. C. Cheatham, Philadelphia, Pa.; W. A. Hillery, New York, N. Y.; H. L. to B. Ellis, Washington, D. C.; S. B. Jones, Denver, Colo.; S. Lynn, Ja- where Fulbright, Jr., Springfield, Mo.; J. maica, N. Y.; W. D. Wells, Wash- ard- L. Harrison, Omaha, Neb.; H. P. nd a Hervey, Jr., Chicago, Ill.; R. B. en- Highbaugh, Indianapolis, Ind.; H. ten- A. Hillery, New York, N. Y.; H. L. G. Jones, Denver, Colo.; S. Lynn, Ja- maica, N. Y.; W. D. Wells, Wash-

47a-1944

Keeps 'Em Singing For U.S.

This is the answer to what happened to Little Ford Lyle, who used to play with Mickey Rooney in the Mickey McGuire comedy series. He is stationed at Marfa Army Air Field at Marfa, Texas, a two-engine pilot school, where he is a member of the special service staff. Now 22, Private Lyle has spent eight years before microphones of leading radio networks. He was born in Puerto Rico.—(U. S. Army Signal Corps photo.)

Lt. J. T. Wiley First Pilot To Mark Up 50 Sorties

Call - Kansas City, Mo.
1-14-44

By ART CARTER

ADVANCED AIR BASE IN ITALY.—(By Cable, Delayed) — 1st Lt. James Thomas Wiley, 25, Pittsburgh, is the first colored pilot in the history of combat flying to have 50 sorties (trips out on missions) to his credit.

A quiet, modest pilot, he established an enviable record December 2 2as his fighter squadron went on a mission against enemy gun positions and scored four direct hits.

Wiley, one of the first group of pilots to reach foreign shores with the all-colored fighter squadron last April, has been among the unit's outstanding pilots from the outset, helping to establish many firsts and always doing his share in the outfit's important missions.

Wiley's combat record began on the raid of Pantelleria last June and was climaxed in Wednesday's (censored) strafing mission in connection with close support aerial work with the British eighth air force.

In annexing 50 sorties, he has compiled 69 hours, 35 minutes combat time (censored) and 92 hours, 35 minutes operational time overseas.

Wiley is produest of the fact that he never has been forced to turn back as a result of enemy air resistance. He has encountered enemy opposition on several sorties, and flak on 85 percent of his missions, but has yet to be hit.

"Luck," he modestly asserts, has played the major part in my zig-zagging out of the range of enemy flak."

His biggest regret is that opposition from Jerry pilots has fallen off at this stage of the war. He confesses that he would rather face Jerry pilots in dogfights than to weave through heavy patterns of flak that the squadron's aces encounter virtually on every mission over German-held lines.

T. Sgt. Thomas E. Combs, flight chief on the line, was the first to congratulate Wiley as he stepped out of the plane after his fiftieth sortie. Cpl. George W. Jackson, Pittsburgh, whose job it is to keep tab on such matters, broke the news as Wiley landed his plane, and Combs rushed from his tent to give the pilot the old glad hand. 1-14-44

Wiley also received congratulations from the commanding officer, Captain George S. Roberts, and every pilot in the squadron.

LT. JAMES T. WILEY

He flew as leader of the flight's second element on the squadron's second mission of the day which was led by Capt. Lemuel R. Custis. It was the squadron's 243rd mission (censored).

Weather conditions permitting, (censored) strafing the enemy's important gun positions and other targets continues daily, with the squadron's activity on the upgrade.

All pilots reported increased ack-ack (anti-aircraft) fire, but only two planes received damages, and they were minor, in the big day's operations. Lt Willie H. Fuller, Tarboro, N. C., returned with a hit in the plane's wing earlier; Lt. Willie Ashley, Sumter, S. C., found a two-inch piece of shrapnel in the engine belly cowling after landing safely. 1-14-44

Eight other of the squadron's pilots were hopeful of hitting the 50-sortie mark before the end of the year. They were Capt. Charles B. Hall, 49; 1st Lts. Leon Roberts and Clarence Jamison, 48; James B. Knighten and Willie H. Fuller, 46; John W. Rogers, 44; Capt. George S. Roberts, 42; 1st Lt. Samuel H. Bruce. 40.

Recent promotions include Elwood T. Driver of Trenton, N. J., and Robert W. Deiz of Portland, Ore., from second to first lieutenant.

The most popular soldiers in camp this week were Sgt. Tiram Hardy, and Cpl. Wilbur E. Pearl who distributed nearly 1,500 Christmas packages among the squadron's personnel assuring the men of a Merry Christmas.

CAPT. CHARLES B. HALL

Ace Hall Runs Tally Up To 3 In Dogfights

Defender-Chicago, Ill.

Crack Pilots Get First Chance For Combat Over Beachhead

ALLIED HEADQUARTERS, ALGIERS.—Smashing right into the heart of Rome itself, daring pilots of the all-Negro 99th Pursuit Squadron scored their biggest air victory of the war last week in downing an even dozen Nazi planes.

Probably destroyed were two more Luftwaffe craft while four Jerries were damaged.

It was the proudest accomplishment of the crack 99th fliers in their nine months overseas in the Mediterranean theatre.

The break that finally gave the Negro pilots a chance to quit their strafing and bombing work to take off in combat missions was the need for the P-40's to cover the Allied beachhead landings south of Rome. For five days last week the outfit

Capt. Hall Gets Two

Then Thursday the Nazis attacked The 99th was there and eight Luftwaffe men were felled.

The Jerries came back Friday.

Four fascists failed to return after the 99th engaged them in dogfights

Grabbing the spotlight in the battles were Captain Charles B. Hall o Brazil, Ind., and Lt. Robert W Deiz of Portland, Oregon, who shot down two planes each.

Captain Hall, who brought down the squadron's first plane over Sicily last July, has three Jerries to his credit now and is the ace of the squadron. His last two victims were a Focke-Wulf 190 and a Messerschmidt 109. He got them both on Friday. 2-5-44

Lt. Deiz got one enemy craft on Thursday and another on Friday.

Low Flying Patrols

Others who scored victories on Thursday's bag of eight planes were: Capt. Rodney Custis of Hartford, Conn., squadron operations officer; Lts. Willie Ashley of Sumter, S. C.; Leon Roberts of Pritchard, Ala.; Edward Toppis of San Francisco; Charles Bailey of Punta Gorda, Fla.; and Wilson Eagleston of Bloomington, Ind. One victory was shared by Lts. Clarence Allen of Mobile, Ala., and Howard Baugh of Petersburg, Va.

Names of the two pilots beside Hall and Deiz who scored Friday's four victories were not available

The job of the 99th eagles was laid out for them. It was to hit the Nazi raiders before they could fly away in their faster planes.

The patrols flew low over the Anzio-Nettuno beachhead lying in wait for the enemy. They went hopping over trees and houses at altitudes of only 30 to 50 feet. When the Nazis struck, the P-40's gave chase to the dive bombers right into their home base at Rome. 2-5-44

Crashes in Rome

One of the 99th fliers saw one of his victims spin down in flames into the streets of the capital.

Lt. Leon Roberts in telling of his clash declared: "I was following and weaving a lot but I gof a burst into his right wing and he flopped over on his back and into the ground."

Prior to the battles of Thursday and Friday, the squadron had a record of only one enemy plane downed and several "probables." The pilots had frequently complained that they were jinxed and never got into an area of enemy air activity.

Pilot Marks 50th Mission Against Nazis

Afro-American—Baltimore, Md. 1-15-44

Lt. James T. Wiley Establishes Record for 99th Squadron

8 OTHERS HAVE 40 OR MORE TO CREDIT

Unit Sees Increased Activity; Two More Pilots Promoted

By ART CARTER

AFRO War Correspondent with U.S. Troops in North Africa

[Copyright. Reproduction in whole or in part expressly forbidden.]

AN ADVANCED AIR BASE IN ITALY (Delayed, Censored) — First Lieut. James Thomas Wiley, 25, of Pittsburgh, is the first colored pilot in the history of combat flying to have fifty sorties to his credit.

The quiet, modest pilot established this enviable record December 22 as the 99th Fighter Squadron went on a mission against enemy gun positions and scored four direct hits.

Lieutenant Wiley, one of the first group of pilots to reach foreign shores with the squadron last April, has been among the unit's outstanding flyers from the outset, helping to establish many firsts and always doing his share in the outfit's important missions.

Raided Pantelleria

His combat record began on a raid over Pantelleria last June and was climaxed in Wednesday's strafing mission in connection with close support of aerial work with the British Eighth Army. In annexing fifty sorties he has compiled 69 hours 35 minutes of combat time and 92 hours and 35 minutes operational time overseas.

Lieutenant Wiley is proudest of the fact that he never has been forced to turn back as a result of enemy air resistance. He has encountered enemy opposition on several sorties and flak on 85 per cent of his missions, but has yet to be hit.

Credits Luck

"Luck," he modestly asserts, "has played a major part in my zig-zagging out of the range of enemy flak."

His biggest regret is that opposition from Jerry pilots has fallen off at this stage of the war. He confesses that he would rather face Jerry pilots in dogfights than to weave through heavy patterns of flak that the squadron's aces encounter on virtually every mission over German-held lines.

T/Sgt. Thomas E. Combs, flight chief on the line, was first to congratulate Lieutenant Wiley as he stepped out of his plane after his fiftieth sortie. Cpl. George W. Jackson of Pittsburgh, whose job it is to keep tab on such matters, broke the news as Wiley landed, and Combs rushed from his tent to give the pilot the old glad hand.

Led Flight Section

Lieutenant Wiley also received congratulations from the commanding officer, Capt. George S. Roberts, and every pilot in the squadron. 1-15-44

He flew as leader of the flight's second element on the squadron's second mission of the day, which was led by Capt. Lemuel R. Custis. It was the squadron's 243rd mission.

Weather conditions permitting, strafing the enemy's important gun positions and other targets continued daily with the squadron's activity on the upgrade.

All pilots reported increased ack ack fire, but only two planes returned in the big day's operations with minor damage. Lieut. Willie N. Fuller of Tarboro, N.C., N.C., returned with a hit in his plane's wing. Earlier Lieut. Willie Ashley of Sumter, S.C., found a two-inch piece of shrapnel in his engine belly cowling after landing safely.

Eight other of the squadron's pilots are hopeful of hitting the fifty-sortie mark before the end of the year.

They are Capt. Charles B. Hall, who now has 49 to his credit; First Lieuts. Leon C. Roberts and Clarence C. Jamison, 48; James B. Knighten and Willie B. Fuller, 46; John W. Rogers, 44; Capt. George S. Roberts, 42; First Lieut. Samuel H. Bruce, 40.

Recent promotions in the squadron were Lieuts. Elwood T. Driver of Trenton and Robert W. Deiz of Portland, from second to first lieutenant.

Most popular soldiers in camp this week were Sgt. Hiram Hardy and Cpl. Wilbur E. Pearl, who distributed nearly 1500 Christmas packages among the squadron's personnel, assuring the men of a merry Christmas.

Air Forces Prohibits Racial Segregation

Courier-Journal Louisville, Ky.

Washington, Aug. 24 (U.P.)—A War Department spokesman said today that the Army Air Forces recently issued a general letter to all its installations in this country calling attention to the department's policy against discrimination between whites and Negroes on Army posts. 8-25-44

The department's policy, the spokesman said, was that there must be no discrimination between Negroes and whites at Army posts, especially at post exchanges, bus depots, and theaters. and on buses.

Lt. John H. Morgan Overshoots Runway and Crashes in Field

Afro-American—Baltimore, Md. 1-15-44

Ga. Flyer, 23, Escaped Death Once Before by Parachuting to Safety Over Sicily

By ART CARTER

AFRO War Correspondent with U.S. Troops in Italy

[Copyright. Reproduction in whole or in part expressly forbidden.]

AN ADVANCED AIR BASE IN ITALY—(By Cable, Censored)—Members of the 99th Pursuit Squadron buried First Lieutenant John Henry Morgan Sunday.

Lieut. Morgan, 23, of Cartersville, Ga., was fatally injured when his plane crashed on January 2. He died six hours after the tragic mishap without gaining consciousness. Death was caused by a compound skull fracture. The fatal accident occurred when the youthful pilot's plane overshot the regular landing strip on his return from a routine flight during which he was "slow-timing" his plane. Morgan's ill-fated landing had a tragic twist for he made two attempts to land, the second resulting in his eventual death. On the first try, he was apparently blinded by the sun and circled the field for a change of course.

LIEUT. MORGAN

The second attempt was made from the opposite end but the plane overshot the metal-stripped runway, ploughing into a grassy field beyond. Once the speeding plane hit the meadow, disaster was obvious as a four-foot ditch loomed in its path 200 yards away. 1-15-44

The plane bounced across the ditch and crashed 50 feet ahead, its left wing demolished and its propeller thrown from its engine mooring.

British soldiers, manning an antiaircraft gun nearby, rushed to the wrecked plane and found Morgan unconscious. The squadron's ambulance crew removed the injured pilot to the hospital where he died six hours later. The terrific impact had crushed his skull.

The loss of Lieut. Morgan was a sad blow to the squadron as he was one of its jolliest members. He was commissioned at Tuskegee on September 5, 1942, and joined the squadron overseas as a replacement pilot on July 23, 1943.

His father, James Morgan also of Cartersville, is next of kin.

Morgan had 26 sorties and 32 missions. He was a member of the Caterpillar Club Mythical Organization of Pilots who parachuted out and returned to tell about their experiences. His entrance came twenty days after joining the squadron when he was forced to bail out over Sicily. 1-15-44

Black Airmen Down Five Nazi Planes Over Italy

Daily World Atlanta, Ga. 6-11-44

Group Under Command Of Col. B. O. Davis, Jr.

By HARRY S. McALPIN

Washington Bureau of the Atlanta Daily World and NNPA

WASHINGTON—In an air battle with 20 Nazi planes, a Negro fighter group under command of Colonel Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., sent five of the 20 crashing to the ground according to a War Department announcement Saturday.

Fighters flying new Thunderbolts

were escorting bombers of the 15th Air Force bound for Munich.

This fighter group which went overseas about a year after the 99th Fighter Squadron had blazed the trail for Negro fighter pilots is building in air strength when it first entered the tra- was also under the command of Colonel Davis, then Lieut. Colonel Davis.

Services were conducted at the post. He is fifth pilot lost to the squadron since it come overseas last April, three having been killed in accidents and two reported missing in action.

Lieut. Wendell O. Pruitt of St. Louis, Mo., went overseas, was also under the command of Colonel Davis, then Lieut. Colonel Davis.

First Lieut. Melvin T. Jackson, of Warrenton, Va., the ace of the squadron had blazed one each were Second Lieut. Frederick A. Funderberg, of Philadelphia, and Second Lieut. Wendell O. Pruitt of St. Louis, Mo. 6-11-44

warfare 6-11-44

Willie Greene, of Staunton, Va., Los Angeles, and Second Lieut.

47a-1944

INSIDE TUSKEGEE

Combat Pilots Returned from Overseas Get Minor Assignments While White Ruling Clique Holds Best Positions

Courier — Pittsburgh, Pa.

By JACK DAY, Special Correspondent

9-23-44

(Second In A Series)

9-23-44

NEGROES here say that those who will sit down at the peace table and seek out the profiteers in this war should look to the clique here at the Tuskegee Army Air Field as a shining example of the un-American practice of feathering one's own financial nest at the expense of one's government and people. They say that, while qualified Negro officers have gone out from this field to make the supreme sacrifice, the clique has remained behind to exact the last "filthy lucre" by rapidly promoting themselves to the highest-paying ranks.

Who are the men that comprise this powerful and vicious inner-circle and perpetuate its existence as a racket for profiteering?

MISSISSIPPIAN PLAYS SIMON LEGREE ROLE

First, and probably highest on the list, is Lt. Col. John T. Hazard, who has previously been described as a tobbaco-chewing, Negro-hating, former CCC supervisor from Mississippi. More serious indictment is that he is the "whip" of the clique. His job is to "keep the guys in line." Orders emanate from his office of executive officer that control the policy of the field. He is known as a hard taskmaster—a sort of Simon Legree, who lashes with a profligate tongue and who wears a store-bought frown that is designed to scare the wits out of the bravest officer on the field. His best qualification seems to be his ability to "pull the right string" at Maxwell Field, the operating agency for this field.

Even more serious indictment is that Colonel Hazard's technique and theory in dealing with Negroes so closely jives with that of the office at Maxwell Field, that handles decisions on the policy at this field, he has become a more powerful force on the field than Colonel Parrish, the commanding officer. Colonel Hazard has been here throughout the existence of this field. He is said to have openly boasted that he would "be here when it closes." From lieutenant to lieutenant colonel is the record of his promotion since he has been here.

9-23-44

Negroes say that a Negro officer should have been assigned to this post, held by Colonel Hazard, a long time ago. They point out that during the existence of this field there have been many Negro officers far more qualified to hold the job. At present they refer to Negro Major William B. Edelin as a Negro officer qualified to fill this office.

ROBBED OF CHANCE FOR EXECUTIVE STAFF

Major Edelin is a graduate of Howard university and a former teacher at Storer college. He came to this field as a captain more than two years ago. Prior to coming here, he had served many years in the National Guard. On this field he is respected and admired for his ability and soldierly manner. At present he is serving as Commanding Officer of Section A, a minor post.

The record of Major Edelin's assignments since he has been here is another example of how Negro officers are shifted around always on the fringe of the inner-circle. He came here as a Commanding Officer of a unit which has since been transferred overseas. Shortly after arriving, he was relieved as Commanding Officer of this unit and replaced by a white major. As Captain Edelin he was sent to an Air Inspector's school and returned to the field as an assistant to Major Givens, the Post Air inspector. (Now comes the squeeze play) White Major Givens was transferred from the field. As his assistant, Major (then Captain) Edelin was the logical successor to this vacated key post. Instead of promoting Edelin to that post, white Major Mitchell Haifter was brought to the field and placed in white Major Givens' vacated post. Edelin was transferred out of headquarters and made a Commanding Officer and promoted to Major. Edelin got his majority rank, but Negroes were once again robbed of an opportunity to have a representative on the executive staff.

It is believed by many that Major Edelin could have filled the post of Air Inspector; it is also believed that he could have done a far better job as executive officer than Colonel Hazard. Comparing the abilities of these two men is a ludicrous pastime among Negroes here.

9-23-44

SOME SHENANAGINS THAT ARE FAMILIAR

How white Captain John G. Cooke, Jr., was assigned to his present post as deputy for supply and maintenance (key post) and promoted to major is another instance of the impolitic lust of the clique in its nefarious machinations to keep Negro officers out of key positions. Some time ago this field underwent a reorganization, a sort of shuffling of the cards. Negroes here, accustomed to such "shuffles," expected the clique to come out with the best hand, but were somewhat surprised at seeing not one but TWO jokers in the winning hand.

Joker No. One: Captain Cooke was serving as Commandant of Cadets, a purely administrative job. When the highly technical office of Deputy for Supply and Maintenance was created in the shuffle, Captain Cooke, an administrative officer, was assigned to this technical duty and promoted to major. Captain Harris, a graduate of West Virginia State college and a graduate of the regular Cadet Corps here at the field, had been assigned to this department for some time. He had attended more than one Army school for maintenance since working in this department. Is the inference here that there was no Negro officer qualifiied to fill this newly created post?

9-23-44

Joker No. Two: Negro Lt. John F. Cuyjet came here three years ago as a graduate of an Ordnance school. For some time he was the only Ordnance Officer on this field. About six months later, white Second Lt. Fred P. Wright came here rated as an Air Corps officer, but was assigned to Ordnance. Meanwhile Lieutenant Cuyjet was made Post Armament Officer with duties away from Ordnance headquarters. Both Wright and Cuyjet were promoted to first lieutenants. Now comes Second Lt. John M. Horn to the field as an Ordnance officer. That was the set up when the clique picked up the cards. Ready for the shuffle?

MEDICAL CORPS WITHSTANDS SIEGE

Presto . . . White Lieutenant Wright is assigned to the newly created and highest officer in Ordnance, Automotive equipment operations and maintenance officer and promoted to captain. Latecomer white Lieutenant Horn is now promoted to first lieutenant and made Post Ordnance officer. Negro Officer Cuyjet? He remains a lieutenant and is assigned as Post Motor Maintenance officer; a high-sounding job which simply means that his job now is to "keep the trucks rolling."

9-23-44

The two above cases are indicative of the frantic effort put forward by the clique to keep white officers in these key posts regardless of the qualifications of those white officers. In one case an administrative officer was placed in a highly technical post, while in the other a white officer was given the highest post in ordnance, notwithstanding the fact that he was not an ordnance officer.

The one section on the field that has withstood the siege of the clique is the Medical Corps headed by competent, affable, two-fisted white Colonel Richard C. Cumming. Negroes say that he has repeatedly fought off any attempt to liquidate Negro officers in his section. They say that but for a man of Colonel Cumming's calibre, the section would not be able to boast of such ranking Negro officers as Lt-Col. George McDonald, Majors Raymond King and Harold E. Thornell, ably assisted by 13 captains. Although Negroes are deeply indebted to Colonel Cumming, they point out that since this is supposed to be an All-Negro field, Negro Lieutenant Colonel McDonald could and should do the job.

CIVIL SERVANTS DO COMPETENT WORK

9-23-44

Quite often here the clique grows lax in finesse and appoints some white officer, whose qualifications are so shabby that he becomes the laughing-stock of intelligent Negro workers under him. Such a case occurred recently when a white officer was assigned to a key post. After stumbling through his work for a few days, he finally confessed to his helpers that he didn't know anything about the job and asked them to help him get straightened out. Apparently they did. He recently received a promotion.

The Negro workers mentioned above play an important part in this story. As civilian employees under Civil Service, some have been here since the opening of the field. In each of the key offices (excepting the finance and intelligence sections) there is a Negro civilian executive who serves as chief clerk. Under him are other Negro employees (sometime numbering as high as forty) assigned to individual tasks of running the office. These people know their jobs. This, in most cases, explains how it doesn't make much difference who the clique places in the top position, the work will be done anyway by these competent Civil Service employees. As it has been pointed out, it often falls the duty of these workers to train the white officers assigned to their section.

But for the sake of wasting precious paper, this story could go on adducing innumerable examples of the wizardry of the so-like-Pendergastian political set-up at the Tuskegee Army Air Field. It could mention the fact that recently white Captain Charles H. Everett, Post Signal Officer, was transferred from the field; that Negro Second Lt. Robert E. Campbell, Assistant Post Signal Officer, who has been a second lieutenant on this field for a long time, was by-passed and a white lieutenant appointed to the vacated post. It could show that just prior to a recent reorganization, there was a mass transferral of competent Negro officers from the field. Only for the sake of space, must it forbear.

For the Record!

In our story of last week, we referred to the fact that Capt. Harold Martin had not been promoted to the rank of major. Between the time the story was written and published, Captain Martin was promoted, and now is Major Martin.

A SORDID STORY, INDEED

9-23-44

Here is the slate of the clique as found on the Tuskegee Army Air Field today. Comprising all of the key posts, including headquarters and the executive staff, it does not include ONE Negro officer on this "ALL-NEGRO" field, but reads like a "Who's Who" among white officers. It tells its own sordid story.

Colonel Noel F. Parrish, Post Commander; Major Robert L. Boyd, Air Inspector, Training; Major Mitchell Haifter, Post Air Inspector; Lt.-Col. John T. Hazard, Deputy for Administration and Service (executive officer); Capt. Clyde Bynum, Post Adjutant; Capt. Herbert J. Golden, Air Inspector, Technical; Major Edward C. Ambler, Jr., Post Intelligence Officer; Capt. Curtis G. Bowen, Post Exchange Officer; Capt. Weldon O. Yeager, Post Personnel Officer; Major John G. Cooke, Jr., Deputy for Supply and Maintenance; Major William G. Williams, Assistant Deputy for Supply and Maintenance; Capt. Steve Day, Acting Post Quartermaster; Capt. Henry Ross, Base Transportation officer; Captain Fred P. Wright, Automotive Equipment Operations and Maintenance Officer; Capt. Lee L. Peterson, Base Engineering Officer; Capt. Florent J. Verhulst, Jr., Post Finance Officer; Capt. Thomas J. Collins, Commandant of Cadets; Major Reginald G. MacKay, Post Engineer; Lieut. Robert Crouch, Assistant Post Engineer, and Lieut. Roger C. Graham, Assistant Air Inspector, Training.

When the above list is compared with the lone Negro, Major George W. Webb, Post Provost Marshal, holding a key office, the story is complete.

9-23-44

FLYING INSTRUCTORS HAVE DONE GOOD JOB

No mention has been made so far of the white officers at the field, whose duties are solely those of training cadets to fly. In this instance, and this alone, the maintenance of white officers in key positions seems to be justified. At the beginning, there simply were no Negroes qualified to hold positions as flight instructors on this field. To have made instructors of early graduates of this field would have meant a long delay in getting the famed 99th Pursuit Squadron into combat. That Negro instructors could have been trained on a civilian basis is a matter of fact. However, more about that later.

Heading the list of the flight personnel is serious, square-dealing Lt.-Col. Donald G. McPherson, Deputy for Training and Operations, who came here as a lieutenant when the field first started operations. Negroes say that by hard and earnest work he has earned his promotions. Next in line are Majors Gabe C. Hawkins, Jr., Director of Basic Single Engine Training, and Robert M. Long, Director of Single Engine Training. These are followed by a few captains and many white lieutenants serving as commanders, minor directors and instructors.

RETURN PILOTS GET MINOR ASSIGNMENTS

It is interesting to note that these flying officers who have done all of the hard work of training, have far fewer of the higher ranks. Of these flying officers, it is said that the Negroes of America owe them a sincere vote of appreciation. Credit where credit is due.

9-23-44

On the other hand, the Negroes of this field, and all over America, smouldering under three years of the fanatical depredations of these unscrupulous officers here at Tuskegee, are waiting to "explode the powder keg" if any such acts of discrimination are dealt the few Negro pilots who have recently returned here from combat. These men are Captains Wiley, Jamison, Custis and Carter; Lieutenants Lane and Knighten, only as instructors at the BOT TOM OF THE LADDER.

9-23-44

all members of the famed 99th **SOME ARE BITTER.**

Pursuit Squadron, which distinguished itself over the beachhead at Anzio.

9-23-44

Negroes say that there is not a single one of these men who could not qualify for any key post on this field. They point to the fact that although these men have been here for some time only TWO of them have been AS SIGNED AT ALL; and those two

I talked with one of these men who had recently returned from combat and he was very bitter, to put it mildly. He had been over the long trail; a trail that started at this very field three years ago and led to the deserts of Africa, Italy and the skies of Italy. He had endured all along that trail enough humiliation to "stir a fever in the blood of age and make the in-dubious government that a Negro make the steel." As could fly and fight in airplanes. oked upon the He had returned to this field to e's opportunity find the same conditions that he d shut his eyes left—the same men carrying on eat job ahead. the intimidation of his people. No hoping that wonder that he is bitter.

But what could he do about it, only a tempo- he asked? He is bound by Army when he re- regulations to follow orders. I told be a different him that there was nothing that he had seen he could do. I said that it would prove to his be the shame of EVERY NEGRO

9-23-44

rape of his people's opportunity and the situation. Over Italy he had his buddies go down. He had done all that he could to prove to his fant's sinew strong as a cadet he had looked

CIVILIAN IN AMERICA IF HE DIDN'T DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT.

INSIDE TUSKEGEE

White Officers Still Hold Key Posts At All-Negro Flying Field — Veteran Negroes Get Well-Known Run-Around!

Courier — Pittsburgh, Pa.

By JACK DAY, Special Correspondent

9-16-44 *(First In A Series)*

THIS is Tuskegee Army Air Field. Three years ago Hilyard Robinson and McKissack and McKissack, Negro architect and contractors, came here at the direction of their government to convert a wooded site into what is now a magnificent airport whose buildings and paved runways stretch for miles over the red clay carpet of this section of Alabama. Surrounded by rolling hills, as immutable as the people who inhabit them, this field in the valley was created as a haven, a proof of democracy for 13,000,000 loyal Negro Americans who demanded participation as pilots in their country's armed forces. More realistically, it was created as a compromise to progressive Negro leaders who demanded complete integration.

The amazing logic used by the War department in setting up this one field for thousands of Negro youth (from which it is only possible to graduate a few hundred) ran something like this: "The training of Negroes as Army pilots is an experiment. We must first seek an answer to the question—'Can Negroes fly and fight in airplanes?' We, therefore, are setting up the field at Tuskegee as an all-Negro field that Negroes may prove their ability to run it and fly from it."

9-16-44

"NOBLE EXPERIMENT" EAGERLY WATCHED

As absurd and insulting as was this attitude on the part of the War department, Negroes accepted the challenge and looked forward to the outcome of the "noble experiment" at Tuskegee. After three years of patient waiting, Negroes have grown bitter in their criticism of the War Department for keeping only half of its promise. They say that although Negroes have been taught to fly from the field, all of the key posts are still filled by white personnel. Protests have reached such a pitch that political factions are bound to consider the situation at Tuskegee as one of the hottest issues of the impending political campaign.

For the first time since the opening of TAAF, the Negro voter will have a chance to go to the polls in a national election and vote on the conduct of the war and the methods of training involving Negroes in the prosecution of that war. No other training facility has received the attention of the Negro on such a wide and controversial scale as has TAAF. It seems only logical to believe that those who seek the Negro vote will have to answer the question: "Why, after three years, is this field not an all-Negro field as promised?"

OLD-TIMER SUMS UP OFFICER ATTITUDE

9-16-44

"How," I asked an old-timer at the field, "do you feel about the fact that Negroes are intentionally kept out of the key positions at the Tuskegee Army Air Field?"

"It's a hell of a situation. Makes us feel that we are a bunch of children to be looked after by the Great White Father."

Something gathered in his throat as he told of the haunting faces of the many qualified Negro officers who have come to this field in hopes of being promoted to the key positions of rank and responsibility only to be shunted to the hinterlands after performing some menial task that could have been accomplished by the rawest recruit. As he departed, I wondered how many fine young Negro officers, who had passed through Tuskegee, felt the same way. Does the memory of this treatment linger in the mind of some Negro officer on some far-flung front as he goes forward to battle? Only when Negro officers have been mustered out of the service will there be any true account of the amount of damage done to their morale by this chicanery at Tuskegee.

In the meantime, let's lift the lid and see what really goes on inside the Tuskegee Army Air Field.

The finance section here, headed by white Captain F. J. Verhulst, is the most unbelievable paradox of a unit on an "All-Negro" field in which there are NO NEGRO OFFICERS OR ENLISTED MEN. It is known to the men on this field as the lily-white outfit. Centered around this section is probably the most pathetic case of injustice on this or any other field.

FINANCE EXPERT GIVEN RUN-AROUND

9-16-44

Two years ago Captain Algernon Sparks, Negro, came to this field from Fort Huachuca. At Fort Huachuca, and before, he had served many years as a member of the regular Army and had attained the rank of Warrant Officer upon the basis of his qualification as a Finance Officer. When this country entered the war, the War Department sought out Warrant Officer Sparks and commissioned him as a captain and sent him to Tuskegee Army Air Field with the obvious intent that he would become the Finance Officer. It seems that those who had control of this field had plans other than those of the War Department as a white lieutenant went right on as head of the finance section although a NEGRO CAPTAIN with more rank and service was on the field.

Meanwhile, what was Captain Sparks' assignment while at Tuskegee? That can best be judged by his remark to a friend as he was leaving Tuskegee.

"My contribution at Tuskegee can be summed up in the title of the song: 'Time On My Hands.' Well, at least I've developed a great ping-pong game."

Thus did the best prepared Negro Finance Officer probably in the whole Army Air Forces, spend a year at Tuskegee playing ping pong.

9-16-44

TWO ALL-WHITE UNITS

Since the Finance section is one of the two units on the field in which there are no Negro officers and the enlisted men are white, Negroes have been trying to understand the motive involved. Some believe that it is an act of intimidation based on the warped psychology — "He who handles the money is boss." Most believe that the administration here does not trust the Negro to handle a large sum of money; these associate this administrative policy with the time-worn theory that ALL Negroes steal.

The other lily-white unit on the field in which there are NO Negroes—officers or enlisted men—is the Intelligence section. This section is headed by white Major Edward C. Ambler, Jr. His rapid rise in ranks and long stay here establish him as a member of the clique that runs this field. A little more than two years ago Major Ambler came here as a Second Lieutenant. Is this another instance in which the War Department felt that Negroes could not be trusted?

Regardless of the motives involved in the two foregoing cases, Negroes condemn these two specific cases as a grave affront to the honesty, integrity and intelligence of every Negro of the Nation.

Negro Captain Harold N. Martin served for many years in the National Guard. Before coming to Tuskegee he was recognized as one of the outstanding Negro experts in athletics in the country. After more than two years at Tuskegee he has never received an athletic assignment. At present he is serving as Director of Ground School training. He came here over two years ago as a captain. His rank at present is STILL captain. The prediction is that he will LEAVE as Captain although white Second Lieutenants have been promoted to MAJORS on the same field and in LESS than the time Captain Martin has been here.

Negroes here point out Captain Martin is one of the most intelligent officers on the field. With his college and previous Army experience, they believe that he could adequately fill any key office on this field assigned to a ground officer. (Certain duties and offices on an Army Air Field call for qualifications amounting to actual flying experience. Key posts referred to in this article are those not requiring flight experience.)

I asked one group how it was possible that a man of Captain Martin's calibre could be prevented from automatically becoming a Major. A light-minded individual explained it this way:

9-16-44

"You see, buddy, it's just like the old shell game. Yessir, just like it. You know in this shell game the guy has a little pea that he keeps throwing under first one shell and then the other. Now you see it—now you don't. All of a sudden the three shells are down and all you got to do is to pick up the shell with the pea under it and you win. Now, you swear that you saw him put that pea under a certain shell, and boy, are you surprised that there is no pea when you pick up that shell. Catch it, buddy, that pea isn't under any one of the shells. It's in his hand, buddy, in his hand. The clique here does the same thing about promotions and key appointments for Negro officers. First you see them—then you don't. Finally when you are placed in some position where you just KNOW that the next step is an appointment to the head position of your section, you walk up and pick up the shell and it's the same old story. In his hand, buddy, in his hand."

9-16-44

MANNING TABLE PROVIDES OUTLET

"Now you would be smart," he continued, "and make a fuss about that pea and how it wasn't down there at all. Not me, buddy, not me. I knew a guy that did that once. He woke up in Bouganville."

From a more serious member of the group I was more intelligently informed. It seems that there is an army regulation, known as the Manning Table, which determines the number of officers that may be assigned to any one field. This table breaks down into statistics which show the number of colonels, majors, captains, etc., that can be assigned to the field and points out the offices that they must hold to attain the ranks commensurate with those offices. (For example, the office of Post Quartermaster would entitle the person serving in that capacity to hold the rank of Major.) It is obvious under this table that an officer must be assigned an office of certain responsibility (if his present office is the top for his rank) if he is to receive a promotion. Negroes say that this is the weapon by which Negro officers have been subjugated in the quest for higher offices and ranks. Negro officers, for the most part, are only assigned to those duties calling for the lower ranks.

9-16-44

Under the above explanation, Captain Martin has not been promoted for three reasons: first, he is a Negro; second (because of the first), he has not been assigned to a duty calling for the rank of major; third, since the allotted number of majors is already filled by white officers, he only can be promoted by transferring a white major. (Beautiful, isn't it?)

CAPTAIN HALL GETS THE BY-PASS MANEUVER

There is another method, copied from victorious armies, used by the clique here to prevent qualified Negro officers from what should be automatic appointment to higher offices. This method is known as the by-pass maneuver. The maneuver can best be demonstrated by revealing an occurrence of only a couple of weeks ago.

The incident began with the transferring of white Major Warren R. Crump, Post Quartermaster, from the field. It seems that Major Crump had been a bad boy and was no longer in good standing with the clique. Major Crump's transferral left Negro Captain James L. Hall, Commissary Sales Officer, as the highest ranking Quartermaster officer on the field. Other Quartermaster officers were white Captain Steve Day (less seniority than Captain Hall), supervisor of Supply, and white second Lieutenant Robert S. Kubicheck, Property officer. (Note that although Captain Hall outranked both Captain Day and Lieutenant Kubicheck, Captain Hall held the lesser office.)

9-16-44

When Captain Hall was left as the ranking Quartermaster officer on the field, the ability of the clique was really tested. Here is how the by-pass was started. The first move was to make Lieutenant Kubichek, a second lieutenant, the Post Quartermaster. It is reported that Captain Hall strongly indicated that he would not serve under the second lieutenant. It is reported that Captain Hall was then summoned to Colonel Parrish's office, where Colonel Parrish is said to have pointed out that he was SUCH a good Commissary Sales Officer and that since he had no other SUCH good man for the commissary, would he mind going right on being the Sales Officer?

THE FINALE AND THE EPILOGUE

The finale went something like this: white Captain Day was appointed "acting" Post Quartermaster: white Lieutenant Kubichek remained as Property Officer; Captain Hall went right on being a very dejected, discouraged and disgusted sales officer in the Commissary.

9-16-44

Epilogue: Those who know the pattern only too well say that very soon, now, either Captain Day will be permanently appointed and promoted to Major, or a white Quartermaster officer who outranks Negro Captain Hall will be brought to the field.

This, then, is an introduction to the inside of the Tuskegee Army Air Field, the ALL-Negro field created by the War Department to stand as a symbol of fair play to the 13,000,000 Negroes of America and their sons in the Army Air Forces of their country. It might well be so dedicated to the many fine young Negro men who have gone to their deaths in flaming planes.

2 TAAF Instructors Killed in Tenn. Crash

Afro-American-B

TUSKEGEE, Ala. — (ANP) — Second Lieuts. Luther R. Davenport, 25, of Loving, Ga., and John F. Currier, 23, of Detroit, instructors at the Army Air training school here, were killed last week in an airplane crash near Oneida, Tenn.

9-23-44

The accident is said to have occurred during a routine combat training flight in a basic trainer plane.

det Raymond C. McEwen of Chicago, Ill., was killed instantly. last mother, Mrs. Ethel McEwen, of 2939 Vincennes Avenue. Chicago.

Pvt. He is survived by his

Aviation Cadet Killed in Crash

New York Age 10-14-44

TUSKEGEE, Ala.—Aviation Cadet vanced phase of his training as a

47a-1944

The Color Guard ... Lt. Col. B. O. Davis, Jr.

Mayor Welcomes Class of Cadets

Mayor La Guardia is shown on the steps of City Hall yesterday as he greeted the Nation's first class of Negro air navigation cadets. They arrived on a test flight from Honda Field, Honda, Tex. 2-17-44 *Photo by Arthur Leipzig, PM*

All-Negro Unit Running Vital Army Air Post

PM - New York, N.Y. 4-20-44

Highly Trained Radio Company Mans Secret Base

(Copyright, 1944, by Chicago Sun and Field Publications)

U. S. ARMY HEADQUARTERS, SOUTH PACIFIC, Apr. 10 (Delayed).—An aircraft warning company that maintains constant vigil against Jap planes in the South Pacific is the only such highly trained outfit operated solely by Negro officers and enlisted men, the War Department reported today. So valued is its work that the nature of its operation is a closely guarded secret.

Commanded by Capt. Herbert R. Orr, a graduate in radio engineering from Howard University, Washington, D. C., and former instructor in electronics at Florida Agricultural and Mechanical College at Tallahassee, Fla., the company was activated in May, 1942, at Tuskegee, Ala. Orr's wife, Ruth, is teaching at the Florida institution. 4-20-44

The majority of the technicians received training at the Signal Corps School at Fort Monmouth, N. J. Most of the remaining personnel came from the Army Fighter Command School at Tuskegee. Officers of Capt. Orr's staff are graduates of some of the country's foremost schools. They are 1st Lts. William K. Spears, Indianapolis, Ind.; Edward S. De L'Aigle, New York City, and Maurice I. Scott, Battle Creek, Mich.; 2d Lts. Ivee U. Timmons, Miami, Fla., and Revelle Crockett, New York City.

Typical enlisted men are Staff Sgt. Lawrence S. Miller, New York City, who studied radio extensively and operated an amateur station

Negro Flier Killed On Training Flight

Advertiser-Montg. Ala. 4-28-44

TUSKEGEE, ALA., April 27.—Lieut. Francis B. Peoples, 24, of Henderson, N. C., was killed during a routine combat training mission at the Tuskegee Army Air Field yesterday.

A board of qualified Army Air Force officers have been appointed to investigate and determine the cause of the accident.

Lieut. Peoples was a former student at Hampton Institute where he was well known in athletics. He was a member of the latest class of pilots to graduate from Tuskegee Army Air Field, and was commissioned on April 15, 1944. His wife is the former Lucile C. Jones, New York, and his parents reside in Henderson, N. C.

Before his career as an aviation cadet, Peoples was a driver and gunner with a tank battalion at Camp Hood, Texas.

Race Engineer Becomes Gunner In Flying Fort

Daily World Atlanta, Ga.

Gets Thrill Of Lifetime High Over Berlin

4-15-44

SOMEWHERE IN ENGLAND — (ANP)—High above the stratosphere at 30,000 feet, Pvt. Leroy Sullivan, colored aviation engineer of Aberdeen, Miss., got the thrill of his life as he fired the waist guns of the first Flying Fortress in which Sullivan belongs. It was at the controls of the plane from the Tuskegee Flying school when the armada that rained bombs on routine check trip, and when the ship's armament accomplished Berlin in the first American assault on the heart of the Nazi empire.

Pvt. Sullivan was given the chance to fire the waist guns. 4-15-44

The trip in the bomber was arranged for Pvt. Sullivan by Isaia Fort, Sullivan, a soldier to accompany the crew of Flying on a test run, Pvt. William Aside from being the first Negro to fire the waist guns, Pvt. Sullivan had the added pleasure of flying with the same pilot who advanced training, plane at the controls of the plane from the Tuskegee Flying school on the mission over Berlin was completely demolished when it crashed near Birmingham, Ga., about 9 p. m. Wednesday. The Negro pilot, E. S. Dishope, of New York, bailed out and was uninjured, according to officials of the Atlanta Army Air Base. 4-15-44

PILOT UNHURT IN CRASH

Head Squadrons

Daily World, Atlanta Pa. 4-12-44

CAPTAIN ROBERT TRESVILLE

FIRST LT. EDWARD GLEED

Captain Robert B. Tresville, Jr., and First Lieutenant Edward C. Gleed are squadron commanders in a fighter group operating in North Italy under the command of Lt. Colonel Benjamin O. Davis, Jr. Captain Tresville, one of the first regular Army officers to be commissioned from West Point into the Air Corps, is pictured here while a cadet. He is the son of Chief Warrant Officer R. B. Tresville of Macdill Field, Fla. Lieutenant Gleed, a graduate of the University of Kansas, is the son of Herbert T. Gleed, Lawrence, Kansas, and was a press photographer in civilian life. He received his commission at the Tuskegee Army Air School. (U. S. Army Air Corps Photo.)

Atlantan Learns How To Check Panel

Daily World, Atlanta, Ga 4-6-44

Lt. William R. Walls, head of the Link Trainer Section at the Tuskegee Army Air Field shows Aviation Cadet Carroll H. Robinson of Atlanta, Ga., how to check his instrument panel while flying under adverse weather conditions. The young 23 year old officer received his commission O. C.S. Miami, Florida, and recently completed the Instrument Training Course at Bryan Field, Texas. Lt. Walls is a graduate of Hampton Institute, Va., and after twenty-nine months in the service states that, "working with the Link Trainer is almost as fascinating as flying the real ship on a routine flying flight." (Photo by AAF Training Command.) 4-6-44

4-6-44

NEGRO FIGHTERS PROTECT ALLIED PORTS IN ITALY

Tribune-Chicago

5-8-44

BY SEYMOUR KORMAN.

[Chicago Tribune Press Service.]

AT AN ADVANCED AMERICAN AIR BASE IN ITALY, May 7.—The first all-Negro air fighter group in any war theater now has been in action here for two months and has flown 307 missions with more than 4,000 individual sorties. The group, many of whose combat and ground personnel are middlewesterners, has been attached to the coastal command, serving as harbor protectors and strafing enemy held roads north of Gaeta.

The Negro flyers have been using P-39 Airacobras. The group is commanded by Lt. Col. Benjamin C. Davis Jr., Washington, D. C., son of the only colored brigadier general in American history. More than 90 per cent of the officers are college men.

Work Is Patroling and Strafing.

"The group has not been credited with any victories over enemy planes," 1st Lt. Robert G. Pitts, Des Moines, Ia., headquarters officer, told THE TRIBUNE, "but that is because our task thus far has been patroling and strafing. We do claim two damaged Messerschmitts, tho." Pitts related a recent incident which happened when some Negro pilots spied a B-26 Marauder crew which had been forced to bail out and was in a dinghy off Gaeta. The pilots hovered protectingly above, drawing heavy German anti-aircraft fire. But they suffered no casualties, and soon a British Walrus flying boat rescued the stranded crew.

One of the pilots in the group is 2d Lt. Lawrence Bernard Jefferson, Grand Rapids, Mich., former Northwestern university football star, and another is 2d Lt. Carroll N. Langston Jr., who practiced law in Chicago and who lives at 6319 St. Lawrence av. 5-8-44

Many from Chicagoland.

Other Negro pilots from Chicago are 2d Lt. Harry L. Bailey, 5427 Michigan av.; 2d Lt. Alexander M. Bright, 4332 Langley av.; 2d Lt. John Daniels, 4027 State st.; 2d Lt. Felix J. Kirkpatric, 4155 Prairie av.; 2d Lt. Cornelius G. Rogers, 9531 Howard av., and 2d Lt. Craig H. Williams, 6637 Eberhart av.

Also from the middlewest are the following pilots:

Second Lt. John F. Briggs Jr., Anderson, Ind.; 2d Lt. Arnold Cisco, Alton, Ill.; 2d Lt. Maurice V. Esters, Webster City, Ia.; 2d Lt. Joseph P. Gomer, Iowa Falls, Ia.; 2d Lt. Hezekiah Lacy Jr., Inkster, Mich.; 2d Lt. Dempsey W. Morgan Jr., Detroit, Mich.

Second Lt. William B. McClenic, Akron, O.; 2d Lt. Charles E. McGee, Champaign, Ill.; 2d Lt. Earl S. Sherard Jr., Columbus, O.; 2d Lt. Luther H. Smith Jr., Des Moines, Ia.; 2d Lt. John J. Suggs, Terre Haute, Ind.; 2d Lt. Charles I. Williams, Lima, O., and Capt. Charles Debow Jr., Indianapolis, Ind.

Capt. Brooks Executive Officer.

Capt. Nelson S. Brooks, 4642 Michigan av., Chicago, is the group's executive officer and 1st Lt. Thomas Jefferson Money, 6612 Eberhart av., Chicago, is the group's adjutant. Other Chicago ground officers are 1st Lt. William A. Banks, 212 E. 56th st., and 2d Lt. Paul F. Byrd, 6620 Rhodes av. The squadron medical officer is Capt. Harry B. Anderson, Indianapolis, Ind., and the ordnance officer is 1st Lt. Chester Burton, Indianapolis. 5-8-44

The enlisted ground personnel includes two Chicagoans, Staff Sgt. Edgar A. Clark, 120 E. 36th pl., and Corp. James F. Ferguson, 5356 Prairie av., both radio operators, and Staff Sgt. Duncan L. Galloway, Aalton, Ill., Staff Sgt. Horace Thompson Jr., Cairo, Ill., and Staff Sgt. Thomas Page, Indianapolis, Ind.

Lt. Gen. Ira C. Eaker, commander of the allied Mediterranean air forces, recently inspected the base. He told the pilots how vital and efficient was their work and complimented ground crews on the excellence of their installations and their ability to repair damaged planes quickly.

LT. ROBERT W. DEIZ

Of Portland, Ore., the Negro fighter pilot whose portrait features the war bond poster, "Keep Us Flying," is credited by the War department with having bagged two enemy planes during intense air action over the Anzio-Nettuno beachhead below Rome. More than 200,000 copies of the poster are on display throughout the country. Diez, a graduate of the University of Oregon, and formerly a cello player in the Portland Symphony, is the son of Mr. and Mrs. C. Deiz of Portland.

Defender Ghost

2-5

Downs Two Planes

47a-1944

Skill Of Negro Pilot During Storm Saves Lives Of Crew And Bomber

Giant Plane Was Trapped In Blow

Daily World Atlanta, Ga.

8-12-44

CAMP BRECKINRIDGE, Ky.—(ANP)—Lightning had disrupted compass and electrical communications system, St. Elmo's fire trickled along the wing tips and hailstones drummed the windows as the air corps officer tried to bring his twin-engine bomber and its crew down the storm to safety.

The pilot was 1st Lt. Daniel James, instructor, attached to the 616th Bombardment squadron at Sturgis (Ky.) Air base. The 616th is part of the 477th Bombardment group, first Negro bombardment organization formed.

Returning from a routine night flight, the B-25 Mitchell medium bomber had been caught in a sudden, violent summer storm. The lieutenant was flying "blind" trying to find an opening, first above the home field, then to the north over air ports at Evansville, Ind.

CREWMEN JOKE 8-12-44

The crewmen joked but knew this might be the pay-off.

Lt. James was depending entirely on a radio beam his operator had picked up above continual static. Twice the pilot brought the plane close to earth, getting bearings on ground lights. Finally he sent the 11-ton bomber splashing to an almost perfect landing on a storm-swept runway.

The Negro pilot's skill had saved lives and a quarter-million dollar piece of Uncle Sam's fighting equipment. Moreover, Lt. James had maintained the 616th Bomb squad's superior record in safe flying. The unit—commanded by Capt. Raymond E. Gandy, Norman, Okla., one of two white officers in the 616th—has gone more than six months without an accident during its heavy schedule of morning, afternoon and night flights.

GIVEN PRAISE

Capt. Gandy has high praise for the 616th's earnest young Negro officers and enlisted men. He sees them accepting the challenge which falls to all airmen, that of proving their adaptability and right to combat flying.

Members of the first Negro class trained by the army air forces in twin-engine aircraft are among the officers at Sturgin. Their record from the time they began basic air corps training at Tuskegee has been superior. Here in western Kentucky, a few miles from Camp Breckinridge, they are adding to their prestige as army airmen. 8-12-44

Twice the squardon has been commended for its achievements, by the commanding general of the first air force and by the commanding officer of the 477th group's four squardons.

EQUAL TO TASK

Although none can be called a veteran flier—most having graduated since last October—these pioneer Negro bomber pilots have demonstrated they are equal to emergencies. Recently one landed a plane with broken front landing wheel, calmly herding his crew into the rear of the airship to prevent the bomber from nosing over.

Thanks to the devoted work of skilled ground crewmen, graduates of technical schools, aviators of the 616th have small worry about mechanical failings.

In tribute to the ground crews, Capt. Charles R. Stanton, Portland, Ore., assistant operations officers, declared, "Our pilots are still learning but the maintenance men know all about their jobs. Some would rather repair their planes than eat. I don't know when some of them sleep!"

First Negro officers assigned to the squadron were 1st Lt. Henry D. Moore, Chicago, and Capt. Peter Verwayne, New York City, ordnance and transportation officer and flight commander, respectly. 8-12-44

After initial assignments, officer strength increased rapidly. Now heading sections of the 616th are Capt. James Pughsley, Chicago, executive officer; Capt. C. Stanton, assistant operations officer; Capt. George L. Knox, Indianapolis, the squad's most experienced Negro flier; Lt. Walter Nicholson, Long Island, N. Y., supply officer; Lt. David Williams, Detroit, technical supply officer; Lt. Clarence Lewis, Dayton, O., engineering officer; Lt. Whittie English, Englewood, N. J., communications officer; Lt. William H. Lewis, Buchanon, W. Va., adjutant.

Flight leaders in addition to Capt. Verwayne are Lts. Elmore M. Kennedy, Detroit; Leslie A. Williams, San Mateo, Calif., and William D. Tompkins, Fall River, Mass. 8-12-44

In addition to its flight record, the squadron has set an enviable record in maintenance of aircraft and equipment at Sturgis. Inspections are frequent because of the great amount of flying, but more than 95 per cent of planes assigned have been kept ready for use at all times.

Britons Protest Ban On Talking To Negro Troops

Defender — Chicago, Ill.

2-26-44

By GEORGE PADMORE
(Defender London Correspondent)

LONDON.—Members of Parliament and liberal London dailies this week joined in attacking a British War Department order forbidding women in the British Auxiliary Territorial Service to speak to Negro American soldiers except in the presence of white officers, though no such restriction has been imposed in the case of white soldiers.

Laborite William Leach, M.P., asked War Minister Sir James Grigg in Parliament Monday who was responsible for the order, declaring "We want you to undertake the removal of this official recognition of the color bar."

Commenting on the situation, Beatrice Southern, a correspondent writing in the liberal News Chronicle says: "I wish to protest against the disgraceful and invidious regulations. Surely it should be a fundamental, ethical axiom than when one meets a stranger, of whatever race, color or stratum of society, one should assume he has average decent character until his behavior proves otherwise.

"The regulation insults every self-respecting colored man and its psychological effect can only cause untold harm. I have watched the behavior of colored troops in the streets of London and have noted that their behavior is quiet and serious and their bearing soldierly. 2-26-44

"Moreover for some months I taught classes of ATS personnel and gathered that their contact with large numbers of men had had a disillusioning effect, that they had quickly learned to know and understand soldiers and that being young women of some intelligence they quickly acquired the act of keeping any man in his place whether English, foreign, white, or any other color."

Commenting editorially on the parliamentary discussion the London Daily Worker said: "The instance of the order to ATS quoted by Leach, MP, in the House of Commons, is not the only one of its kind reported recently. All that is best in American life is ashamed of the color bar as a blot on American civilization. Progressive forces in the United States are working hard to end it and their efforts during wartime have borne some fruit. It would be intolerable if the war were used to introduce this evil current also in South Africa and other parts of the Empire into Britain. 2-26-44

"Stern measures must be taken to correct any Army authorities who attempt to use discipline owed them by men and women in uniform to smuggle in the color bar. Men who are good enough to come and lay down their lives to fight for Britain are good enough to mingle on terms of welcome and equality with the British people. And what have whites to be especially proud of anyway—isn't Hitler a white?"

Grigg denied knowledge of a bar against Negro troops, said he had never heard of such an order and would be glad to see a copy of the alleged order and would investigate its circulation.

Two Pilots Die When Planes Crash In Italy

Journal & Guide Norfolk, Va

2nd Lts. Edward Laird And Othel Dickson Victims

8-26-44

By JOHN "ROVER" JORDAN
Guide War Correspondent
(Copyright. Reproduction forbidden)

ADVANCED AIR BASE, Italy (Delayed) — Two pilots of the Negro Fighter Group were instantly killed in plane crashes June 28 at this busy base of the 15th Strategic Air Force.

The first flyer lost on this fateful day was Second Lieut. Edward Laird, of 3229 Seventh avenue, Brighton, Ala. His plane crashed and burned just after an early morning take-off.

The second tragic crash came in the early evening when Second Lieut. Othel Dickson, 24, of 2806 Grant street, Berkeley, Calif., went down while flying very low near an air field. The wrecked plane quickly exploded into a blaze. The pilot died instantly.

Second Lt. Laird was a former student of Tuskegee Institute. He enrolled in the Tuskegee Army Flying School and was graduated 12 after finishing Tuskegee Army Flying School in December, 1943.

Second Lt. Dickson is survived by his mother, Mrs. Lillie Annie M. Laird and an adopted daughter, age five months.

Second Lt. Dickson and other relatives. He graduate of Coffeyville College. He came over-

They're Flying Fighting Mustangs Now

Daily World
[illegible], Georgia
[illegible], 1944

Fliers of a P-51 Mustang Group of the 15th Air Force in Italy "shoot the breeze" in the shadow of one of the Mustangs they fly. Left to right: Lieut. Dempsey W. Mor[illegible]n, Jr., Detroit; [illegible] S. Woods, Va[illegible] Ga.; Lieut. Robert H. Nelson, Jr., Pittsburgh; Capt. Andrew D. Turner, Washington, D. C., and Lieut. Clarence P. Lester, Chicago. (Photo by Mediterranean Allied Air Forces.)

Our Fliers Protect Bombers On Missions Into Germany

Courier—Pittsburgh, Pa. July 1, 1944

By OLLIE HARRINGTON, Courier War Correspondent

AN ADVANCED AIR BASE IN ITALY—The gallant pilots of Col. Benjamin O. Davis' fighter group, along with its ground crews, have won a secure place in the vitally important 15th Air Force after only a few weeks, during which the entire group changed over from P-39 Airacobras to the much heavier and harder slugging Thunderbolts.

SOLDIERS CONTRIBUTE $4,000 TO COLLEGE FUND

NEW YORK—Among contributions to the United Negro College Fund, which now exceeds a half million dollars in cash and pledges, is one of more than $4,000 from the all-colored 92nd Division at Fort Huachuca, Ariz. The final fund goal is $1,500,000.

The group has firmly entrenched itself in the world famous air force whose heavy-laden Fortresses and Liberators are carrying the grim realities of total war directly into the heart of Germany and into the tortured nations held within the Nazi grip. The extremely responsible position assigned to this tiny army of highly trained fighter pilots marks the complete fruition of the untiring efforts of those individuals who championed the cause of Negro airmen in this war.

FIGHTERS PROTECT U. S. BOMBING MISSIONS

Today these fliers hover protectingly over hundreds of vulnerable bombers as they stab into Germany, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Rumania and Yugoslavia. It is one of the truly great stories of the war and one of democracy's most spectacular triumphs.

A few hours ago I stood on the balcony of a tiny Italian farmhouse which now houses the hard working group operations staff. With me were Major Vance Marchbanks, Tucson, Ariz., group flight surgeon; Capt. Lew Purnell of New Jersey and Capt. Mac Ross, Dayton, Ohio. The operations officers and the veteran pilots appeared with bloodshot eyes after a long night of poring over minutely detailed charts of the enemy territory so that they could impart vital information to the eager pilots at the pre-dawn briefing.

We watched the ominous-looking Thunderbolts sweeping down the runway at ten second intervals to climb steeply to their assigned positions in formations of eight. High above us, their 2,000 horse power radial engines roaring a gigantic symphony, several formations wheeled in a long easy turn above the field to allow the ships scurrying down the runway to fall into position. Finally all of the speeding squadrons had caught up and the formations gradually swung out to sea.

July 1, 1944

RENDEZVOUS AT SEA WITH FLYING FORTRESSES

At a tiny spot pinpointed on the studied charts in the operations headquarters, these fighters would rendezvous with hundreds of four-motored bombers. It was their job to carry them safely into the target. The pilots and crews of these Fortresses and Liberators would be American youths from Georgia, Minnesota, Alabama and Kansas, from scores of solid American towns and hamlets. They would raise their sharp eyes to the beautiful spectacle of these deadly fighters swinging into position above them and at their sides. Each man in these steadily droning bombers would know that the Thunderbolts above them were there to fight off the entire Luftwaffe if it dared to come up this morning. They would know, too, that the ships above them would fight off the enemy even if it meant the loss of every single fighter.

Leaving the balcony after the formations had been swallowed up in the bright haze, we walked into Captain [illegible]nell's office. Efficient GI's were quietly about their chores. There was very little conversation and a portentious quiet seemed to drape the room. Each ear was turned to a small amplifier on Captain Ross' desk. That little box was a magical link between these anxious men and their gallant comrades now winging out over the sea to their rendezvous.

Suddenly the silence was broken. A voice crackled statically out of the speaker. A sergeant about to put a sheaf of papers on the desk stopped his motion in mid-air. The scratching of a fountain pen stopped expectantly. The voice came clear and steady. "Blue Four to Blue Nine. Blue Four to Blue Nine. Tighten up." That was probably the colonel getting his squadron in order. The sergeant put the papers on the desk and the fountain pen continued its scratching.

Minutes dragged by. The sun grew brighter. Suddenly the voice again . . . Blue Four to Blue Six. That bomber on the right has been hit. Turn back with him and carry him home." Another voice answered. "Blue Six to Blue Four. Roger."

In my mind's eye I could see three or four Thunderbolts swing hard around to hover above the crippled bomber. I visualized what was going through the minds of that bomber crew. A crippled ship off by itself would be duck soup for the lurking ME-109's, but with those Thunderbolts weaving protectingly above him, they would get home. I wondered if the men in that ship knew that their homing comrades were what the British admiringly call the "Black Yanks."

Pilots Endure Hunger To Hit Mess-Hall Jim Crow

Defender—Chicago, Ill.
3-18-44

By HARRY McALPIN

WASHINGTON, D. C.—The story [illegible] is by now known to all the [illegible]ican Air Forces—about the [illegible] bomber pilots, in training at [illegible] Field, Calif., who have thr[illegible] down the gauntlet to Ol' Man Jim Crow, but at the same time ex[illegible]pressed their determination to [illegible]come the "best damn pilots in the air forces," in spite of it all.

Every man in that first class of [illegible] pilots (now in advanced training at [illegible] Selfridge Field, Mich.) and in the [illegible] succeeding classes which have fol[illegible]lowed, should be awarded a hero's [illegible] medal of some kind—only the law. [illegible] Army does not decorate its men for [illegible] this type of heroism.

When training of the Negro pilots [illegible] for operation of B-25 bombers be[illegible]gan there was no segregation at [illegible] Amer-Mather Field. Classrooms, mess [illegible] and the PX is staffed exclusively by [illegible] women. But the [illegible] strict sympathy [illegible] pilots. They came [illegible] order to serve [illegible] "jim-crowed" [illegible] on the field in [illegible]

3-18-44

[illegible] Christmas. The girls [illegible] the day off. But [illegible] up their holiday [illegible] the Negro pilots [illegible] want to go into [illegible]ristmas meal.

[illegible] pilots. "We have [illegible] would be a good [illegible] anything to eat."

[illegible] not put a morsel [illegible] Christmas day.

3-18-44

Negro pilot has eaten [illegible] Crow mess hall. They dig [illegible] own pockets and buy [illegible] from the post exchange [illegible] their regular mess assess[illegible]

The jim-crow order is still in effect.

From that day to this, [illegible] orders to eat in the mes[illegible] was told they were not.

Two other classes have followed. But not a Negro pilot has eaten in the mess hall since the infamous order of Maj. Gen. Cousins.

A tradition was thus established. The first class has finished its preliminary training at Mather Field.

7a-1944

Negro Flier Identified As Victim Of Crash

News-Birmingham, Ala 6-13-44

The body of a trainer plane pilot who was killed when his plane crashed at Westover, Ala., in Shelby County Monday, has been identified by officials of the Birmingham Army Air Base, Tuesday as that of 2nd Lt. George K. Hays, Negro pilot stationed at Tuskegee Army Air Base.

Lt. Hays, the air base announced, was making a routine flight from Tuskegee at the time of the accident. The plane crashed near the Florida Short Route in Shelby County, eye-witnesses reported Monday. 6-13-44

Officials of the air base here were sent to the scene of the crash and a Birmingham ambulance brought the body to Birmingham. Address of the pilot was not available Tuesday.

An investigation was launched Tuesday to determine the cause of the accident.

Cpl. Charles J. Russell, of Louisville, is a linesman of the Fifteenth Air Force stringing communications lines between airfields in Italy.

His Airmen Use P-47 s Now

Daily World, Atlanta, Ga. July 9, 1944

Colonel Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., Air Corps, commanding officer of a Negro Fighter group recently credited with five Nazi kills (June 9, 1944) in the Udine area in Northeastern Italy, is pictured here besides a P-47 Thunderbolt with which the outfit is equipped. The 31-year-old West Point graduate of 1936 was promoted to colonel early in June. (Photo by Army Air Forces.)

A Tribute to Lt. Samuel Bruce

By HERMAN MILAS.

Northwest Herald-

Back in nineteen hundred and thirty-five,
With Garfield team master running at his side,
Coach Brigham's Bulldogs charging hard on the loose
Sparkled by their leader, the great Sammy Bruce.

Seattle, Washington 3-8-44

One of football's best players was this lad named Sammy,
So champions were made of the colored club Ubangi,
His thunderous charge was like big guns of a fort,
He was Seattle's all around athletic sport.

Here reaching sportdom's top elevation,
He traveled the length and breadth of a nation,
Where in North Carolina, the record books tell me
He brought fame and glory to A. and T.

From there to Tuskeegee where he took up a course
Becoming an air pilot in Uncle Sam's air force,
After completing this course and fundamentals in it,
He graduated there as a flying lieutenant.

Joining the 99th squadrons fighting air corps,
Destroying his country's enemies on distant shores,
Leading his eagles from his lofty cockpit,
He brought fame and glory to this all-Negro outfit.

He was at his best with his back to the wall
Causing many an axis plane to fall;
And like in football, when he led the pack,
His foes gave ground to his thunderous attack.
Always giving the best when he was in it
Was this Seattle boy and hell-diving lieutenant;
In the dangerous spots he always took his place,
A tribute to his country and also his race.

And in the thickest of the fight,
Amid shot, shell and aeroplane rattle,
You'd find this gallant colored lad,
Fighting to turn the tide of battle.

On his 57th trip as he flew into position,
Fate ordained this to be his last mission;
But, Lt. Sam Bruce, you have not lost the race,
A thousand colored Eagles will rise in your place.

3-8-44

Peace be with you and in the halls of fame,
Like all American heroes, they'll carve your name;
Missed by wife, friends, instructors and all,
May we do as well as you, when we answer the call.

To your beloved mother, hang not your head from the sun,
But give thanks to God that you raised such a son;
So ends the story of a gallant colored youth,
Better known to America as Lt. Samuel Bruce.

Editor's Note: The Northwest Herald is indeed pleased to present Mr. Herman E. Milas, a local young man, to the Seattle public, as our poet de luxe. Mr. Milas is a native of Guthrie, Oklahoma, and has been a resident of this city for the past 14 years. He is the author of several worth-while poems that will appear in the Northwest Herald exclusively, during the next several months.

Confirm Lieutenant

Daily World—Atlanta, Ga.

Tresville Missing

7-18-44

PHILADELPHIA—(ANP) — Confirmation of the report that Capt. Robert D. Tresville, Jr., second officer in command under Col. Benjamin C. Davis, Jr., of the 332nd Fighter group in the Mediterranean area, was missing in action was received last week by Walter Tresville, uncle of the missing aviator.

Capt. Tresville, a West Point graduate who formerly attended the University of Pennsylvania and was a popular tennis star, was officially reported missing as of June 20.

Prior to his assignment overseas, Tresville was stationed at Selfridge Field, Mich. He made his home with his uncle at Germantown until his marriage. His wife and daughter, whom he has not seen, live in Buffalo, N. Y.

7-18-44

Negro Pilots Handle Bombers As Skillfully As Pursuits

Daily World — Atlanta, Ga.

7-19-44

Learn How To Work As Team At Twin-Engine School In California

MATHER FIELD, California — When the 477th Bombardment Group now in training at Godman Field, Kentucky, takes off to "deliver the goods," to the enemy, it will have pilots who learned the the fine points of their business at Mather Field, twin-engine bomber school of the AAF Western Flying Training Command.

Teaching Negro airmen how to fly B-25 Billy Mitchell medium bombers is one of the several Army Air Forces training tasks being accomplished at Mather. These student officers, all of whom won their wings at Tuskegee Army Air Field, Alabama, take to the heavier ship with the same case and skill as they did to fighter craft.

RISE AT DAWN

A typical day for the officers sees them rising at dawn to report to the flight line, where they are briefed on their flight mission. Then they don flight suits and report to the dispatcher and the weather station before heading for the aprons where pre-flighted B-25s await them.

After student pilot, co-pilot and flight instructor clamber into the Billy Mitchell bomber, the ship is taxied out to the take-off point where it thunders down the strip and into the air on a training mission that generally lasts five or six hours.

When the ship returns, the student officer's day is far from over. They grab a hurried lunch and dash off to ground school where they are indoctrined in the technical phases of combat flying.

SPOT THE ENEMY 7-19-44

One of the most valuable arts they acquire at ground school is the ability to tell in twinkling of an eye whether a plane is friend or foe. Master of the knack of differentiating in a split second between Zero and a P-28 often is the margin between life and death in the combat zone. One teaching system employed is the "flash recognition method wherein the profile of a plane is projected upon a screen and the student is given 1-100th of a second to decide whether the ship is Allied or Axis.

Small-scale models of battle ships carriers, cruisers, destroyers and other types of both and friendly and enemy vessels are floated upon a mimic sea to teach student officers speedy recognition of seacraft.

Practical instructions in confronting the weather, navigation, and the inner workings of their Billy Mitchells round off the well-filled training schedule.

Although some of the Negro pilots who have been training at Mather Field entered the Army Air Forces as cadets, many of them worked their way up to officer's bars from the ranks. Some even earned their commissions in other arms and services before they sought their wings. 7-19-44

STARTED IN INFANTRY

Typical of these is Second Lieutenant Victor Brashears, Jr., son of Mr. and Mrs. Victor Brashears, of 2225 Park Avenue, Kansas City, Missouri, who was in the infantry, then was chosen to go to Fort Benning, Georgia, where he attended O. C. S., graduating as a second lieutenant in the infantry. He later decided he wanted to fly, so he went to Tuskegee as an aviation cadet and earned his wings.

Another pilot who first worked his way up through the ranks in another branch of the service is Second Lieutenant Ahmed A. Rayner, Jr., of 2312 Walnut Street, Cairo, Illinois. He entered the Army in 1941 and was assigned to an antiaircraft unit. Soon he was on his way to Camp Davis, North Carolina, where he went to O. C. S. and earned his commission. After serving as an antiaircraft artillery officer, he was transferred to the AAF and won his wings at Tuskegee.

Believe Pilots Sent South For Spirit-Breaking

Daily World
Atlanta, Ga.

ANP Reporter In First Of Series On Biased Base

7-23-44

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Because of persistent reports that the 553d pursuit squadron had been "railroaded" from Selfridge field, Mich., to Walterboro airbase, S. C., for protesting segregation at the northern training field, the Associated Negro Press sent a reporter to Walterboro to obtain the facts in the case for the readers of this newspaper. What this correspondent, Ernest Johnson, chief of the ANP Washington bureau, found is contaned in three articles, the first of which follows.)

By ERNEST JOHNSON

WALTERBORO AIRBASE, S. C.—(ANP)—Because morale of men at this airbase was reported low—

Because a hero of the 99th Pursuit squadron, back from overseas had been dismissed from the service through court-martial, and at least two other men have been court martialed—

And because rumors of general unrest and discrimination had been reported, the Associated Negro Press undertook an on-the-spot investigation of the situation. The outfit involved is what formerly was the 553rd Pursuit squadron, which has been stationed at Selfridge field, Mich., until May 7 when it was suddenly transferred to this South Carolina post, in the middle of Dixie and all it means. 7-23-44

NOT HAPPY PICTURE

The picture is not a happy one. There is indeed much room for improvement on the part of the army air forces if training and the establishment—yes, the establishment—of high morale are to be achieved among a group of men who in a relatively short time will be flying high over Germany for the cause of America.

By the same token, these men and related ground personnnel have the responsibility of constantly exhibiting their diligence in accordance with army regulations, knowing as they do that despite the demonstrated capability of the 99th Pursuit squadron, there is still a segment of the army which even now would prefer not to see Negroes develop in the air branch of this country's armed services.

The 553rd, flying P-47 Thunderbolts, hadn't cracked up yet, as Major Joseph B. Price, assistant director of flying operations and training noted. In fact, there hadn't been a fatality among the men since a short time before leaving Selfridge field, a favorable record.

SPROUTS AT SELFRIDGE

The seed of discord took root at Selfridge. Six officers from the 99th had returned from overseas to work with the nucleus of the 553rd, which was activated last November at Selfridge Field and Oscoda, Mich. They were 1st Lts. Walter Lawson, Graham Smith, Louis R. Purnell, Spann Watson, Charles W. Dryden, and Lee Rayford. The outfit was ultimately to be officered with all Negro personnel. 7-23-44

In due course the men were united at Selfridge and for a time had a succession of commanding officers. The last of them, Lt. Col. Sam P. Triffy, came south with them. Under one of these commanders, Lt. Col. Charles Cayle, the men observed a tendency to place Negro officers as assistants to white supervisory personnel in the table of organization. Lts. Rayford and Purnell decided they preferred fighting and so went overseas with the 332nd Fighter group. Trainees of the 553rd stuck tongues in cheeks.

While at Selfridge the issue of the officer's club arose and a plan to rovide separate facilities for the races was thwarted after the Negro fliers had voted unanimously to refuse the separate club. The undercurrent of resentment developed among the colored officers and evidenced itself in sundry ways.

On May 5 the 553rd entrained for Walterboro airbase. They were not told then or since then why they had been moved south. The accepted opinion among them, however, is that the move was made for the explicit purpose of subjecting them truly to the rigors of segregation as only the south can practice it, and thereby kill their spirit. 7-23-44

LOW SPIRIT TODAY

That spirit today is low, and the transfer is a contributing factor. None of the ranking officers with whom I talked, from Col. Iver Massey, deputy commanding officer of the first air force, down know or was prepared to say why the transfer was made. An obvious explanation might well have been the conjecture made by William H. Hastie, formerly civilian aide to the secretary of war, a short time ago, namely that the main stream of flight training is in the south, and that it is proper that Negro trainees should receive their training where all other to-be flying officers are schooled. But not even this reason was advanced by the commanding officers. "I don't know," was generally their reply to the question .

Incidentally, when the transfer was made, none of the colored boys was permitted to fly his craft down although the whites did. Reason given was that eating facilities might not have been available to them at intermediate stops enroute. "That was a slap in the face," was the comment of one of the fellows with whom I talked, "especially to the boys who had been overseas."

TORN UP ORGANIZATION

The fact remains that the 553rd, officers and enlisted men, arrived at Walterboro on Monday, May 7, found themselves no longer a complete organization but rather than the fliers were now a replacement training unit, and the ground crew a part of the base personnel, and real segregation on an army post was staring them straight in the face. 7-23-44

Public relations officers at Walterboro explained that the post had previously been a sub-base of a base near Charleston but more recently had been given full base status. Further, it was explained that Walterboro had, since the arrival of the 553rd, become a location for advanced training of pilots who would shortly thereafter leave as replacements for men of the 99th and 332nd. The only pilots at the base are colored, except for the various supervisory personnel (instructors). Total personnel at Walterboro was estimated at approximately 1,600 men of which about one-third are Negroes.

Prior to the arrival of the former 553rd a colored aviation squadron (separate) had come in. The number was not large.

Altogether, separate facilities for almost everything but hospital care were provided. At first no attempt was made by public relations officers to make distinction between the character of the Negro personnel, preferring to refer to all of them at RTU (replacement training unit), and the reason offered as justification for seperate facilities was that "the RTU has a schedule to make."

PERSONNEL KEPT OUT

It finally developed, however, that as a means of getting around racial designations for the use of certain facilities, two classes of individuals were recognized and defined: RTU for the colored: base personnel for the white. Hence, when the sign was put up, upon orders of Col. Prince, over the entrance to a service center where sodas are dispensed, it said for "base personnel." It means "Negroes keep out." They have been refused service and so have kept out. 7-23-44

These definitions ignored the fact that both the aviation squadron (separate) and the gound crew which accompanied the 553rd, all Negroes, had become part of the base personnel. Col. Prince admitted later in my talk with him that these deductions were accurate. When he was asked about their actual inclusion, he said simply that "they should have been taken into the housekeeping."

"South Carolina has always been a state which believes in the separation of the races."

He was merely conforming.

47a-1944

They Received Their 'Wings' At Tuskegee Army Air Field

Amsterdam News — New York N.Y. 11-11-44

11-11-44

(Reading in order, left to right): SECOND LIEUT. CORNELIUS D. DOWLING, who was commissioned from the Infantry Officers' Candidate School, Fort Benning, Ga., before winning his wings at TAAF. He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Seymour M. Dowling of 110 Horton Ave., New Rochelle, New York.

SECOND LIEUT. RICHARD E. THORPE, former editor-in-chief of the publication "Blueprint," is a resident of 47 Chester Street, Brooklyn, N. Y. His brother, Aviation Cadet Herbert C. Thorpe, is also training to become a pilot at Tuskegee Army Air Field.

11-11-44

SECOND LIEUT. RICHARD A. SIMONS, who was a military policeman at TAAF before receiving his appointment to the Corps of Aviation Cadets. He is a resident of 115 Fulton Street, White Plains, N. Y., and is a well-known graduate of the high school of that city.

FLIGHT OFFICER CHARLES C. MAXWELL, progressed to the grade of staff sergeant before being appointed to the Corps of Aviation Cadets. A former enlisted man at TAAF, the twin-engine pilot is the son of Mrs. Adele Phillips of 466 W. 141st Street, New York City.

ABOVE PHOTO SHOWS SECOND LIEUT. Theodore W. Lancaster, who was recently commissioned from the Aviation Cadet Corps at the Tuskegee Army Air Field. This proud young recipient of "wings" is the son of Mrs. Effie P. Lancaster of 10 Oregon St., Rochester, N. Y.

Morale Low Among 477th Pilots

Courier — Pittsburgh, Pa. 9-2-44

(EDITOR'S NOTE—The following story is the first in a series, written by the Washington correspondent of the Negro Newspaper Publishers' Association after four days "on the spot" at

FIRST LIEUT. PAUL T. ANDERSON is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Ira Anderson of Woodbine, N. J., and is married to the former Miss Louise Hollis of Rochester, N. Y. He received his original commission at the Infantry Officers' Candidate School at Fort Benning, Ga.

Transfer Of Veteran Combat Pilots From Tuskegee Called Military Must

Defender — Chicago, Ill.

12-30-44

By VINICE T. SPRAGGS
(Defender Washington Bureau)

WASHINGTON.—The transfer of 15 veteran combat pilots, members of the 99th Fighter Squadron, from the Tuskegee Army Air Field to bomber-pilot training at Douglas Field, Arizona, was predicated on a dire need for Army Air Field to bomber-pilot training at Douglas Field, Arizona, was predicted on a dire need for Army Air Force replacements and has nothing to do with race, sources in the War Department revealed this week.

Substantiating their claim, it was pointed out that just last week, 75 white combat pilots with overeas experience were assigned to the Douglas Field for identical transition training as that accorded Negroes.

Venturing to make a prediction, my informant declared, "The men most likely to remain in the Army Air Forces after the war," and many Negro pilots express that desire, "will be those men with several ratings." They termed this transition to twin-engine training another step towards that goal.

Slowdown In Enlistees

For sometime now there has been a slow-down in the number of Negro men trickling into the army air forces. This is due, many believe to: (1) a lack of general information on the whole army air force program; (2) assignment of men to other branches of service who express a preference for air force training, and the difficulty of getting a transfer once the assignment is made: (3) the slow acceptance of Negroes by the army at the initiation of the program, and the attending caustic criticism which served to sour many prospects who otherwise would have been interested: (4) the high physical and intelligence requirements; (5) the restriction of Negroes to the jim-crow Tuskegee Army Air Field for initial training; (6) resent ment of the treatment accorded officers and enlisted men in the nearby Southern towns; and, (7) the amount of adverse criticism which still attends TAAF.

Endeavoring to meet the needs of the field, occasioned by these shortages in Negro enlistees, army air force regulations, which require that all trainees admitted be enlisted men, have been modified as follows: Negroes at the time of induction may express a preference for air forces and air crew training, a privilege which for several months has been denied whites because of surpluses of enlistees. Negro officers in air forces (administrative personnel) are permitted to take pilot training while whites are barred. 12-30-44

Plan Recruiting Drive

Should shortages continue, it is contemplated that air officers such as navigators and bombardiers may be admitted to pilot training. Additional steps are at present under consideration for the very near future to speed up the replacement under consideration for the very near future to speed up the reflow, possible including an extensive recruitment campaign.

Enlisted men entering the Tuskegee Army Air Field are trained predominantly to fly single-engine craft. Some in the advance stage of training swing over to twin-engine training. The former group upon completion of training go to Waterboro Field, S. C., as replacements for the 332nd Fighter Group now stationed in the European theatre. The latter group go to Douglas Field for transition training, thence to Godman Field, Ky., or Atterbury Field, Ind., for placement in the 447th group which is in the process of being built up to sufficient numerical strength for combat service. 12-30-44

All entry into flying is voluntary, and Negro men may at the time of induction express a preference for air force training. Following careful screening, and in accordance with test results and the needs of the service, they are sent to various phases of flying. In spite of this expressed preference, many "wake up" to find themselves "railroaded" into a branch of service contrary to their wishes, most often quartermasters, engineers or transportation.

Then to try and get a transfer creates a "real" situation. In this instance, my informant says, they should complain to the office of the Civilian Aide to the Secretary of War for having been "wrongfully assigned." Steps will be initiated immediately. Often the wait is long, and satisfactory results not always forthcoming.

In some quarters it is felt that the Tuskegee Army Air Field should not stand as an excuse to bar Negroes from future training possibilities at Kelly and Randolph Field, Texas, the West Point of the air; and, that men with aviation experience expressing a desire for retention in the army air forces, should be considered for retention in the regular army on a basis of their interests and experience.

12-30-44

Godman Field, Ky., where the 477th Bombardment Group is preparing for overseas duty.)

By HARRY McALPIN

WASHINGTON, D. C. (NNPA)—**Can an efficient bombardment team, capable of holding its own in combat overseas, be developed under a condition that crushes the spirit of officers and enlisted men, destroys their morale, puts them on the verge of psycho-neurosis, and makes them hate the guts of their commanding officer?**

Can such a group continue to maintain the top-ranking safety record, maintenance record and flight per plane record in the First Air Force when it lacks confidence in its supervisors, instructors and commanders?

Can a group of men with the high intelligence required for success in the air corps—among both officers and enlisted men — be treated like children and yet be expected to fight like men?

These are the question marks overshadowing the 477th Bombardment Group now stationed at forsaken and isolated Godman Field, Ky., the first Negro unit of its kind in Army history.

To understand fully the implications of the facts, opinions and criticisms which will be revealed in this series, one should know something of the historical background of the Negro in the Air Forces. 9-2-44

On September 2, 1943, the Assistant Secretary of War, John McCloy, who was Acting Secretary of War on that day, announced in a press conference that Negroes would start cadet training as bombardiers and pilots in a B-26 Transition School on October 3, 1943.

By December, 1943, he promised, training of navigator and bombardier officers would begin.

"All this training," the Acting Secretary gave assurance, "will be with white students."

The Medium Bombardment Group "must be activated by July 1, 1944," with complete crews, he said. 9-2-44

PROBLEMS BORN AT SELFRIDGE FIELD

On November 15, 1943, the first 12 Negro flying officers to receive wings as twin-engine pilots were sent from Tuskegee and Selfridge Field and assigned to the B-25 Transition school at Mather Field, Calif.

The 477th Bombardment Group was organized and stationed at Selfridge Field in Michigan, near Detroit in February, 1944. It was placed under the command of Col. Robert Selway, who had been in command of the training of the fighter group turned over to Col. Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., and sent overseas. Colonel Selway is still in command of the 477th.

Many of the problems which now exist at Godman were born at Selfridge Field. The most noticeable incident at Selfridge—excluding the shooting of a Negro soldier by Colonel Colman, then base commander, last fall—was the officer club incident. That incident is explanatory of much that is happening today. Here it is as never revealed before:

The officers' club at Selfridge was at one time used by all officers, white and colored. When Col. Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., then a lieutenant colonel, was returned to the United States from overseas and assigned to the fighter group then training at Selfridge, a reception was given him in the officers' club. 9-2-44

COLORED OFFICERS ORDERED FROM CLUB

After the 477th was activated, there was an occasion when three Negro officers went to the club and ordered beer. They were served. But while sitting at a table, a white major came up to them and told them they did not belong there. He told them to leave. One of the three officers informed the major that the club was for officers and gentlemen, that they were officers and gentlemen, and that they saw no reason to leave. When the officer repeated the suggestion, he was asked if that was an order. He turned on his heels and went upstairs for Colonel Boyd, then the post commander, who was present at the club during the time.

Colonel Boyd came down, approached the men and told them they had better leave. He was told of the existence of War Department Order 210-10, which said all buildings and facilities were available to all men on a post. He insisted the men leave the club. Asked whether that was an order, the colonel left without saying more. 9-2-44

Following this incident, the Negro officers, in their individual capacities and not as a protest or petition, filed applications for membership in the club. Their quarters were inadequate and no other recreation was available to them on the post. The apparent sudden change in policy, as indicated by the experience of the three officers, had stunned them.

USES THREAT TO ENFORCE BAN

Colonel Boyd wrote a letter in which he refused to take favorable action on the club membership applications. He told one of the Negro officers at the base to go back and tell the boys that "I am the big fat son of a b—— who said for them not to use the club, and tell them I said so."

Colonel Selway, then, as now, the group commander of the 477th, called a meeting of the Negro officers and told them that Negroes were not to go to the club and were not to make application for membership. He read Colonel Boyd's letter, and said: "If anyone in my group protests the decision of the post commander I will give him an unsatisfactory efficiency rating."

Many of the men withdrew their applications for fear of being reclassified. 9-2-44

But word of the incident reached the White House. From there it is reported to have gone to the top officials of the Army. An investigation was made substantiating the complaint. This conclusion is drawn from the fact that the top Army officials took the matter in hand and ordered it cleaned up. The War Department, to the embarrassment of the Air Forces, stood behind WD 210-10, and immediately after the investigation, Col. Boyd was transferred away from the base, the commanding officer of the 553rd Fighter Group was transferred, as was also the major who instigated the incident in the club with the three Negro officers. 9-2-44

It was after this action had been taken by the War Department that Gen. F. O. D. Hunter came to the base and made a speech on the incident. He was apparently giving the Air Forces' answer to the Army action. He said that in the past, there had been no racial problems at the base and that he did not intend to have any now.

GROUP TRANSFERRED TO SOUTHERN CAMP

He stated the War Department is not ready yet to recognize Negroes on a plane of social equality with white men. Whether this was right or wrong, he said he did not know. He added that this group is no place to try to advance your race. Wait until you go overseas and do something to make your race proud of you, he told the men.

He concluded by saying all agitators would be weeded out and dealt with.

A decision was then made to avoid future embarrassment to the Air Forces, since the Army had shown an inclination to uphold the officers in their rights. It was just a short time later that the 477th and the 553rd were transferred from Selfridge to Godman Field in Kentucky and Walterboro, S. C., respectively, under conditions bordering on the ludicrous. 9-2-44

When told that his officers believed the move was made to put them in a Southern atmosphere where patterns of segregation and isolation from white groups would eliminate a recurrence of the problem without solving it, Colonel Selway admitted to this correspondent that the officer club incident had caused a "big furore." At the same time, he said, there was a big furore about the accidents to fliers. These accidents, he declared, were due to the poor visibility around Selfridge.

The move to Godman, he claims, was made to have better flying weather. But, it was not his decision, he maintains.

Move 14 Vet Pilots To Save Jobs Of Whites

Chicago Defender - Ill. 12-2-44

TUSKEGEE, Ala.—A re-assignment order, executed by Colonel Noel Parrish, commanding officer, this week moved four Negro captains and ten first lieutenants, all of whom have recently been returned from overseas duties as fighter pilots in the United States army air force.

The order saved a like number of white officer pilots, none of whom have seen service outside of the United States, from being transferred from non-combat duty at Tuskegee Army Air Field.

The re-assignment order was handed to the men who have served with a fighter group, all of whom who had served at one time or another under Colonel Benjamin O. Davis Jr., on Friday, Nov. 24, and the officers were given until Saturday, Dec. 2, to report to the Douglas Army Air Field, Douglas, Arizona. 12-2-44

Question Move

The 14 officers had been sent back, after a year or more in Africa, Sicily and Italy, presumably to utilize their experience in combat overseas in the training of new pilots to take their places and the places of those killed in combat. These men were pilots in single-engine fighters and had received their instructions and earned their wings and commissions at the Tuskegee Army Air Field.

The new order of re-assignment sends these men to the Arizona field for the purpose of training them to handle B-25s (the Billy Mitchell medium bombers) which will eventually cause them to be sent to join an all-Negro bomber group which is preparing for overseas duty.

The officers affected by the re-assignment order all feel that they would rather remain in the single-fighter group and return to their former command if necessary for them to be returned overseas. They, said a spokesman, are of the opinion that they are being sacrificed to allow these white pilots to remain at the Tuskegee Army Air Field to continue to train Negro cadets who seek pilots' wings and commissions.

List of Officers

It was learned by the Chicago Defender that Capt. Charles B. Hall of Brazil, Ind., the first Negro pilot to shoot down a Nazi plane, had been included in the original order which named 15 to be transferred. On Saturday, Col. Parrish struck Capt. Hall's name from the list. 12-2-44

The officers sent to Arizona are Capt. Lemuel R. Custis, Hartford, Conn., and First Lieut. James Bernard Knighten, Tulsa, both of whom had been the Defender Bud Billiken club's guest in the mammoth parade in Chicago on Aug. 14 of this year. Also Capt. James T. Wiley, Pittsburgh, Pa.; Capt. Clarence Jamison, Cleveland; Capt. John W. Dogers, Chicago; First Lieutenants George R. Bolling, Phoebus, Va.; Allen G. Lane, Demopolis, Ala.; George A. Taylor, Philadelphia; John A. Gibson, Chicago; Clinton B. Mills, North Carolina; Robert O'Neil, Detroit; Frank D. Walker, Virginia; Willie Ashley Jr., Sumter, S. C., and Charles H. Debow, Indianapolis.

Several Were Shot Down

Lt. Walker had been injured in an overseas plane crash. Lt. O'Neil had been shot down by the Germans over southern France and was rescued by the Free French. Capt. Jamison was shot down in the fighting over Anzio beachhead between the Allied and enemy lines and was rescued by American paratroopers. Lt. Lane was shot down over Anzio. Lt. Bolling was shot down over Licata, Sicily, the day after the invasion of that island.

Capt. Charles Hall, 99th Veteran, Speaks To TAAF Graduates

Age — New York Am 11-11-44

TUSKEGEE ARMY AIR FIELD, Ala. — Addressed by Captain Charles B. Hall, famous fighter pilot of the 99th Pursuit Squadron, the current class of aviation cadets who received their wings and commissions Monday at the Post Chapel of the Tuskegee Army Air Field, was described by Colonel Noel F. Parrish, commanding officer, as the second largest and most impressive in the history of the field.

Describing a few of his thrilling experiences while flying as a bomber escort with members of the 99th, Captain Hall's inspiring address to the graduates stressed the importance of teamwork and alertness in the career of a fighter pilot. The veteran flier now assigned here as an instructor, urged them to learn all they can and to retain that possibly can and to retain that knowledge.

Following the oaths of office administered by Major Fleetwood McCoy, Post Trial Judge Advocate, Captain Thomas J. Collins, Commandant of Students, made honor awards to Aviation Cadets Charles P. Myers (first); Silas M. Jenkins (second); and James H. Harvey, Jr., (third). Music for the exercises was furnished by the Cadet Glee Club

letters of appointment were presented by Col. Parrish. The presentation of wings was made by Lt. Col. Donald G. McPherson, Deputy for Training and Operat

47a-1944

DIPLOMAS FOR FLYING LIEUTENANTS—Receiving pilots, left to right: 2nd Lt. Paul J. Bonseigneur, 2nd his graduation diploma from Lt. Col. Charles O. Garrels (right), acting commander of the Army Air Forces Training Command installation at Douglas Army Air Field in Arizona, is 1st Lt. James A. Hurd, group leader of the pilots of Class 44-2-H. Lt. Augustus G. Brown, 1st Lt. Luther A. Goodwin, 1st. Lt. John A. Rector, 2nd Lt. Robert S. Brown, 2nd Lt. Warren E. Henry and Flight Officer Russell C. Nalle, Jr. All have completed 10 weeks of transitional training in the B-25 Mitchell bomber.

Jim Crow Killing Army Air Group;

Amsterdam News—New York, N. Y.

Famous Outfit Facing Disbandment

Replacement For All Negro Units Badly Needed; Maybe 'Curtains'

12-23-44

WITH THE 15th U. S. AIR FORCE IN ITALY, (ANP) — Jim Crow policies, patterns and restrictions, imposed upon Col. B. O. Davis' all-Negro air unit by American racial tradition, are slowly killing the highly publicized Jim Crow figther group. The death knell was sounded when the outfit went into battle and was forced to rely upon the Army's Jim Crow pattern of filling the casualty gaps in its ranks from Negro air schools.

While the bottom for sufficient air replacements has admittedly been scraped, it is generally known that there has been a drastic reduction in the number of air cadets that are being trained in Negro air schools. The critical personnel situation exists, the men say, because Col. Davis' air unit must rely upon jimcrow air schools to fill all gaps in their ranks.

12-23-44

Set Record

With 19 months of combat service to their credit, the all-Negro fighter group has seen action over Munich, Vienna, Toulon, Ploesti, Sofia, Belgrade, Friedrichshafen, Budapest and Salerno. They accounted for 17 enemy fighters and bombers in one day's work over the Anzio beachhead and have provided cover for heavy bombers, patrolled harbors, convoyed ships, hunted U-boats and made reconnaissance flights.

Composed of four all-Negro fighter squadrons, it comprises every department for keeping pilots flying, from mess and maintenance to armaments, engineering, morale and administration. All phases of the group's duty routines duplicate those of other U. S. fighter groups and all are performed by Negroes.

Nearly 30 per cent of the combined air and ground personnel have attended college, records show, and at least three quarters of the 200 commissioned officers were born and reared in the North. The bulk of the enlisted men come from below the Mason-Dixon line.

Replacements Handicapped

Not only are the replacements they get handicapped by having been trained by white instructors without battle experience, the flyers stated, but they are unfamiliar with the type of aircraft pilots will fly in combat. The inexperience of Negro officers, pilots and mechanics, explained the men, and the mental strain of competition against the entire corps of white pilots and ground crews, constitutes a serious handicap.

12-23-44

Members of this all-Negro air unit are also conscious of differentials applied by the air corps command in the judgment of their performance and feel the effect of intellectual isolation, produced by having all Negroes in one organization away from every other fighter pilot group.

The Real Issue

Since high military officials know that the jimcrow air unit can not survive without sufficient personnel replacements and since they have ordered a reduction in the number of trained Negro air cadets at Negro air schools, many of the men believe that anti-Negro Army officials may be determined to just let the outfit die from a lack of replacements. It will be a matter of jimcrow killing jimcrow, they point out.

"Back home I've seen a white man kick a Negro till his nose bled," said one Negro pilot from Dixie. "Sometimes I don't know why I fly," he added, "but I guess I want to do my part to prove that Negroes can do their jobs as well as whites."

12-23-44

Represents Cross-Section

Personnel of this all-Negro air outfit represents a cross-section of Negro people. Some are the sons of tenant farmers, cotton pickers and share-croppers. One Southern-born youth admitted that he earned less than $1 a week before entering the Army. Another said he had never handled mechanical tools before coming to this air unit.

All of the men are admittedly getting their first real opportunity and are desirous to make good, but entertain no assurance Negroes will be given their proper places in post-war aviation in America.

Across The Desk

By LUDLOW W. WERNER

Newspaper Enterprise Assn.

TAAF — From Chehaw, Ga., the staff car which took me out to the Tuskegee Army Air Field made the run in record time. We were still trying to catch the last of the broadcast celebration and so our driver took us down to the flight line where there was a large crowd of civilians and soldiers gathered.

N. Y. N. Y.

We reached the flight line just as the crowd started to disperse. I did not feel particularly good about this because after all I had spent 25 hours on a train and had wanted to be present at the broadcast. Every difficulty is supposed to have its compensations, however. Mine was to spend the next six days living at TAAF and enjoying unlimited privileges.

After being escorted to what was to be my home at the field for the next week, I was taken to the cadet mess hall and served an enjoyable turkey dinner. Seated at the next table to mine were Major General William O. Butler, recently returned from the European Theatre of Operations to assume command of the Eastern Flying Training Command, and his aides; and Colonel Noel F. Parrish, commanding officer of TAAF, and his aides.

All around us were the cadets, who are in the next graduating class, and cadets in classes to follow them. How many of them there were I cannot disclose for rea-

The dinner over, my escorts and I went to the post headquarters where I was given innumerable blanks to sign — blanks governing my activities on the field and in connection with my visit. Once that detail had been finished, I was shown around the field and then left on my own until 1700 (5 p. m.) when I sat down at the officers' mess hall. Many of the faces were familiar ones and after the meal I talked with a lot of old friends from New York. All were anxious to know what was going on back in civilization."

At this point I should like to record that most of the officers and enlisted men at this field facetiously refer to the fact that they are seeing service in a foreign country and feel that they should receive the extra compensation that soldiers receive for foreign service.

At this point, too, I should like to record that Macon County, in which TAAF is located, is a dry county, but local bootleggers are cleaning up. The price for a fifth of rye whiskey runs from $10 to $12; scotch sells for from $14 to $17 a

fifth. Needless to say that some of the townspeople are reaping a harvest dispensing wet goods.

Nothing much of general interest happened the first night. Not even the constant roar of motors kept me awake. Nor did I hear reveille. I awoke at 0815. The GI's had long since eaten breakfast; the post restaurant closed at 0800 and the officers' mess was likewise closed when I had showered, shaved and dressed. Woe was me. I was ravenously hungry but could do nothing about satisfying the cravings of the inner man. I vowed right then and there that it wouldn't happen again for the rest of the time I was to be at the field — and it didn't. If you have ever tried to drink Coca Cola in an attempt to satisfy your appetite for food, you will know how dismally I failed. As a last resort I gave up the ghost, decided to stop worrying about it, and went for a walk.

1200 was the most welcome hour in my life that day, although by that time I had lost all desire to eat. Besides, I had already spent three hours talking to soldiers who rather being talked to. It seems that the camp grapevine must have been working overtime for everyone seemed to know that I was a newspaper editor from New York and everyone had something to tell me about what was wrong with the Army, the Field, the South, and the world in general.

Let it here be said that the average soldier is envious of civilian clothing. In most of the barracks, they were not only envious of my civilian attire, but some of them even asked if they could just put on my coat and hat to see what they felt like again.

They say that a satisfied soldier is a bad soldier. If that is the case then TAAF has just about the best body of soldiers to be found anywhere. The most common complaint was that the field was located in the wrong part of the country; it should have been in the north instead of the south. Next to that came the complaint that there were not enough Negro officers in executive positions and as flying instructors. General feeling among the men was that only Negroes who "sanded" (another term for Uncle Tom) got any of the breaks as far as promotions were concerned. The gripes I heard would probably fill a book if I had recorded them. I heard enough, however, to cause me to be on the lookout for the truth or falsity of the complaints.

All-Colored Unit Provides Weather Service at TAAF

TUSKEGEE, Ala.--Manned by six officers and seventeen enlisted men, all colored, the Tuskegee weather detachment is the only source of weather information for the Army Air Field here the primary and advanced training base for colored pilots.

Activated on March 26, 1942, the unit provides weather forecasts and clearances for station and transient pilots, and operates a round-the-clock forecasting service for all types of flight training.

The detachment, the only all-colored installation in the entire Army Air Forces Service, also furnishes post utilities with any climatological data needed for efficient operation.

Rated "Excellent"

The proficiency of the unit's work is reflected in repeated ratings of "excellent" conferred upon the unit by the post technical inspector, the regional control officer of the Fourth Weather Region, and the training wing inspector.

Capt. Wallace P. Reed, 24, a weather officer from Portsmouth, N.H., and a graduate of the University of New Hampshire, received his commission in February, 1942, and has been officer-in-charge of the unit since its activation.

The five other officers are Second Lts. Grant L. Franklin, Pauls Valley, Okla.: Archie F. Williams, Oakland, Calif; John B. Branche, Jamaica, N. Y.; Robert M. Preer, Portsmouth, and Paul E. Wise. Philadelphia

Trained at AAF Schools

All of the officers were trained at AAF weather schools at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the University of California, and Grand Rapids, Mich. All of the enlisted personnel received in-station training at Tuskegee.

Lt. Williams, who set a new world record for the 400-meter run while at the University of California, was employed as a flying instructor by the Oakland Flying Service and the division of aeronautics of Tuskegee Institute before entering service.

Afro-American Baltimore, Md.

11-4-44

Colonel Davis Afro-American Ordered Home

Baltimore, Md.
2-11-44

Major Roberts Now Heads 332nd Fighters

AUSTRIA ATTACKED

3 Flyers Homeward Bound, 9 Promoted

By ART CARTER

AFRO War Correspondent with U.S. Troops in Italy

[Copyright. Reproduction in whole or in part expressly forbidden.]

ALLIED HEADQUARTERS, ITALY (By Cable) — Hampered by inclement weather, the fighter group's activity was reduced to two escort assignments over the week end, providing protection to strong forces of bombers attacking targets in Southern Germany and Austria.

Heavy flak was encountered but there was no opposition from enemy fighters. The latest mission was flown under the leadership of Maj. George S. Roberts, now acting commander of the group. The commander, Col. B. O. Davis, Jr., has returned to the States for an unannounced assignment.

3 Others Returning

Capt. Wendell O. Pruitt of St. Louis, Lts. Heber Houston of Detroit, and William W. Greene of Staunton, Va., are also returning to the States.

Captain Pruitt, 24, is the first of the group's pilots to complete a tour of duty. He has 70 missions, 350 combat hours, and 4 enemy planes to his credit.

"My biggest thrill," he says, "was my first victory when I shot down an ME-109 over the Udine area when interceptors attacked bombers from the rear. We turned in behind them. I picked one off with one long burst."

Was Civilian Pilot

Pruitt had eighty hours as a civilian pilot before joining the Army in the midst of his studies at Lincoln (Mo.) University.

He has high praise for the P-51 Mustang, declaring: "It's the best we have in the sky." He prefers combat flying and says it makes no difference what theatre he is sent to if he has to return.

U.S. troops in Italy improvised this den from discarded tin and packing boxes.

Houston, a member of the oldest squadron, left with 111 missions, over half of which were compiled during the pioneer squad's dive-bombing days with the 12th Air Force, while Greene, with over 50 missions, is one of the pilots recently returned from liberated countries.

9 Made Captains

Six pilots and three ground officers were promoted to captains, while Alphonso Simmons, 25, of Jacksonville, Fla., was elevated from second to first lieutenant.

The ground officers gaining captaincies were:

Prentic A. Townsend, 29, of Lawrenceville, Kan., who serves in the capacity of group ordnance officer, trial judge advocate, summary court officer, and investigation officer;

Col. Davis

D.C. Officer In Group — Ulysses S. Taylor, of Kaufman Texas., squadron engineering officer; Dudley M. Stevenson, 26, of 231 Rhode Island Avenue, Northwest, Washington, group communications officer. He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. James N. Stevenson of Washington, D.C. Leonard M. Jackson, 24, NYC, also flight leader of the 332nd group with 138; Albert H. Manning of Spartanburg, S.C. Dickson is an accomplished musician and often entertains the group with electrical guitar selections. NEW YORK—Col. B. O. Davis, commander of the 332nd Fighter Group, is in Washington on a short visit. Columbus, 24, Harvey, Ill., a Jr., flight leaders of the pioneer squadron in number of missions, with 138; Albert H. Manning of Spartanburg, S.C. Dickson, 24, of Washington, D.C., also flight leader of the 332nd group

47a-1944

First Service Pilots Graduate at TAAF

AFRO-American BALT., Md. 12-23-44

47a

Left to right 1st Lt. Archie F. Williams, Oakland, Calif.; Flight Officers Adolph Moret, Jr., New Orleans; Charles W. Stephens, Monroeville, Ala., and James O. Plinton, Jr., Westfield, N.J., who were recently graduated from the Tuskegee Army Air Field Basic Instructors' School to serve as the first colored Army commissioned instructors for future combat pilots.

Expected Merger Of 99th With New Fighter Group Delayed; 15 Replacement Pilots Arrive

Journal + Guide — Norfolk, Va.

Capt. Tresville Excels In Combat Missions; Praised

Journal + Guide Norfolk, Va.

5-13-44

By Lem Graves Jr.
Guide War Correspondent
(Copyright. Reproduction Prohibited.)

ADVANCED ALLIED AIR BASE, Italy—(By Radio)—Fifteen replacement pilots joined the Fighter Group commanded by Lt. Col. Benjamin O. Davis Jr., last week. All of them had advanced training for several weeks at a North African replacement center.

They were: 2nd Lts. Edward Laird, Brighton, Ala.; Charles B. Johnson, Philadelphia, Pa.; George M. Rhodes, Brooklyn, N. Y.; Alphonzo Simmons, Jacksonville, Fla.; Roger B. Brown, Chicago; Maceo A. Harris, Boston, Mass.; Driscoll B. Ponder, Chicago; Oscar D. Hutton, Chicago; Robert H. Smith, Baltimore; William S. Thomas, Los Angeles, Calif.; Gwynne W. Peirson, Oakland, Calif.; Emory L. Robbins, Jr., Chicago; Hugh St. Clair Warner, New York City; Turner W. Payne, Wichita Falls, Texas; and Henry B. Scott, Jersey City, N. J.

5-13-44

HOW DISTRIBUTED

The first eight are attached to the squadron of the group commanded by Capt. Robert B. Tresville, a West Point graduate; the next six to the group's squadron commanded by 1st. Lt. Melvin T. Jackson of Warrenton, Va.; and Scott is attached to the group's squadron commanded by Capt. Lee Rayford of Washington.

Meanwhile, Captain Tresville again led last week another flight on a successful strafing mission, during which the group pilots under his leadership destroyed seven box cars on a key rail line in central Italy. Ten planes were in on the show.

5-13-44

Capt. Tresville and Lt. Samuel Curtis of Yeadon, Pa., actually riddled the target and Curtis' plane was hit by enemy flak but was able to reach the flight's base safely.

5-13-44

BRILLIANT LEADER

Capt. Tresville always leads his men on important and dangerous missions now being undertaken by his squadron, with a high percentage of success.

He is known to get through to the target personally on all missions even when others in his flight don't get there.

All the squadrons in the Fighter Group continue to go on lengthy and taxing patrol flights and the men are piling up a large number of flying hours.

TO USE NEW PLANE

Meanwhile, they are getting occasional strafing assignments and making the transition to another type of aircraft they will use for future work.

5-13-44

(At present the Fighter Group uses the P-39 Airacobra fighter plane. The older 99th Fighter Squadron uses the P-40 Warhawk plane, used for divebombing as well as a fighter plane.—Ed).

Diary of Negro Airman Reveals Tale of Life, Love, Death

Miami, Fla.

12-23-44

Adrift on Raft in Pacific, He Is Attacked by Japs And Dies Alone

ELKHART, Ind. — The sherr drama of an airman's last days adrift in the Pacific on a lift raft.

The horror of a Japanese plane diving at the raft, piercing his legs with bullets.

His love for a sweetheart he planned to marry on his next leave.

And, just before death, his longing for "Mom's cooking."

All this was unfolded by Mrs. Henry Clevenz, mother of Jack Cooper, 23, of Elkhart, a radioman on a navy torpedo plane that was shot down June 15. The mother pieced together the story — from Cooper's sketchy but graphic log released by the navy, a letter from his squadron commander and also from the commander of a navl vessel that picked up the life raft on July 21, about four days after her son died on it.

Notes to Sweetheart

Sprinkled through the notations scratched laboriously on paper leaves of his wallet were frequent endearments to "Helen" or "Big Eyes" —Miss Helen E. Checchio of Elkhart. She and Cooper had set their wedding date for his next leave.

The log as released by the navy:

July 6—Mom: Wings are in sewing kit, am entitled to all stars and more. Be sure to check ins., etc., 10,000 ins. (roses) to remind me of Helen. I've always loved her. Love, kisses, same for you. Mom, Dad and all.

July 8—Weak. Can't catch fish. . . . No rain — Love Big Eyes.

July 9—Little rain. Headed west. Weak.

July 10—Rain last night, very weak: land close somewhere.

July 11—Mavis flew over — No see — Left eye bad shape. — Still have water. Drifting N. E.

July 12—Little cloudy, no planes, no land. Headed north p.m. Jap Nell saw me — strafed hit me, in both legs — bandaged them — Drifting E.

Caught Small Fish

July 13—Very weak from loss of blood — land in sight — no food since the 4th — 6 ounces of water left — going east.

July 14—Caught one small fish last p.m. — very slight breeze SE if this is my last day tell my Big Eyes to be happy with someone else. I'm back to salt water — God bless you all.

Surprise July 15 tell Helen I found God be happy love. No rain for 2 weeks — tell Helen I loved her until the end — Jack. I love Mom, Dad and all wish I eat some her cooking.

The log stopped here.

Mrs. Clevenz said, based on information she had received, that picked up the raft after it drifted her son had boarded a rubber life raft after the plane and crew were shot down. He drifted hopefully, was an inspiration to "myself, of- ed the raft. Finally hope faded. He concluded:

Provisions gave out.

"We, my officers and men of my command."

Commander of the vessel which you and your son."

2 Tuskegee Flyers Jump to Safety from Mustangs

Afro-American Balto. Md.

By ART CARTER
AFRO War Correspondent with U.S. Troops in Italy

per was buried at sea.

[Copyright. Reproduction in whole or in part expressly forbidden.]

15TH AIR BASE IN ITALY—(By Air Mail)—The Caterpillar Club, the mythical organization of pilots who bail out and live to talk about it, gained another member recently when Lt. William Noel Alsbrook, Kansas City, Kans., was forced to hit the silk.

Lieutenant Alsbrook was on a transition flight at the time, getting the feel of the new Mustang his squadron had switched to when he went into a dive at 10,000 feet.

"I guess I was doing 400 miles per hour and started to roll the ship when I got over on my back and the ship whipped about crazily and started an inverted spin," he recounted.

9-9-44

Dropped to 5,000 Feet

The ship's altimeter dropped rapidly, according to the pilot, and when the needle swept past 5,000 feet, generally regarded as minimum altitude for spin recovery in a fighter plane, the little balls of perspiration began to pop out on his forehead.

The ship's nose fell below the horizon, giving him a little hope, but it promptly went up again and there was nothing else to do but jump.

He bailed out and cleared the ship just in the nick of time, as the parachute opened at approximately 800 feet, just enough to permit him to land safely.

Alsbrook didn't know it until he had picked himself up from the ground and saw a peculiar object floating down from the sky, but the ship's tail had broken off in the roll.

He rode back to base astride a horse provided by a friendly Italian, and now the motto around the fighter group base is, "All rolls are out."

Lt. Alsbrook, whose wife, Mrs. Louise B. Alsbrook, lives in Chicago, Ill., is father of a son, William Noel, Jr., that he has never seen. The baby was born June 14, two months after the 28-year-old pilot came overseas.

Another Makes 2nd Jump

Another pilot, Lt. Clarence W. Allen, strengthened his membership in the Caterpillar Club with a jump over the Island of Elba recently.

9-9-44

Allen, who had a harrowing experience during the hectic days preceding the capture of Rome, was returning from a mission to Southern France when he encountered engine trouble.

Landed on Elba

When he realized he could not make it back to base, he bailed out just off the island and luckily landed 100 yards ashore. Allen spent a night on the island, historic as Napoleon's stomping grounds, then hitch-hiked his way back to base.

Like Lt. Alsbrook, he was unhurt, but this being his second jump he reasons that "this can't go on forever." Two rip chords as souvenirs are enough for any fighter pilot, he says.

Negro Fighter Unit Is Facing Collapse

Fails to Get Adequate Replacements For Casualties

By Roi Ottley
Staff Correspondent

PM Exclusive

ROME, Dec. 13—The all-Negro fighter group of the 15th Air Force, commanded by Col. B. O. Davis, son of Brig. Gen. Benjamin O. Davis, highest-ranking Negro officer in the U. S. Army, is threatened with possible collapse as a unit.

The reason offered by members of the group is that there are insufficient pilots to fly missions. Casualties have depleted their ranks and adequate replacements have failed to arrive. The bottom here has been scraped. Yet the Negro fighter group has demonstrated a toughness, skill and intelligence which may assure Negroes a place in postwar aviation.

As raw pilots they won commendation from Gen. Montgomery for their part in the Italian campaign. They supported the British 8th Army by dive bombing, and strafing enemy machine-gun nests, tanks, transportation and artillery installations.

The Record

The Negro fighter pilots have been in overseas combat 19 months. They have seen action over Munich, Vienna, Toulon, Ploesti, Sofia, Belgrade, Friedrichshafen, Budapest and Salerno. They have provided cover for heavy bombers, patrolled harbors, convoyed ships, hunted U-boats and made reconnaissance flights. In one day's operation over the Anzio beachhead they shot down 17 enemy fighters and bombers.

This group is made up of four all-Negro fighter squadrons. It forms a unique organization, for it comprises every department for keeping pilots flying, from mess and maintenance to armaments, engineering, morale and administration. Every aspect of the group's duty routines duplicates that of every U. S. fighter group. Every function is performed by Negro personnel.

The educational level of the group is high. Nearly 30 per cent of the combined air and ground personnel have attended college. Significantly, of the more than 200 Negro commissioned officers three-quarters were born and reared in the North; those from below the Mason-Dixon line form the great bulk of enlisted men.

1st Opportunities

Some are sons of tenant farmers, cotton pickers and sharecroppers. One confessed he had never earned more than 10 cents a day before being inducted. Another had never seen a wrench before he became an Air Force mechanic. They are getting opportunities for the first time and are making the most of them.

But the fact is that this is a glorified Jim Crow organization and it is for this very reason, the pilots claim, that the personnel situation is critical. While, as an all-Negro organization, it admittedly provided new opportunities, they say it also has serious drawbacks. These they describe as follows:

¶ The inexperience of Negro officers, pilots and mechanics who do not have the opportunity to associate with veterans before going into action.

¶ Lack of a steady flow of replacements caused by the pattern of drawing pilots from only the Negro air schools. The number of pilots being trained has been reduced.

¶ Lack of proper orientation in combat tactics before coming overseas, because their white instructors were without combat experience.

¶ Unfamiliarity with the type of aircraft pilots will fly in combat.

¶ Mental strain of competition against the entire corps of white pilots and ground crews.

Isolated

¶ Intellectual isolation produced by having all Negroes in one organization away from every other fighter pilot group.

¶ Differentials are applied in the judgment of performance by the air corps command.

These criticisms have not impaired the organization's morale. The fact is that it is very high. But it is doubtful whether it hinges on the declared objectives of the war. More than likely it is a group loyalty, tied loosely to aspirations for their race. For each man has pride in his part in the common undertaking. He wants Negro pilots to excel. They reason that they have a job to do and cooperation is necessary for success, but they have moments when they feel the whole effort is worthless.

I talked with a Southern-born pilot. He was somewhat bewildered about the slogans of democracy and its practice. He said:

"Back home I've seen a white man kick a Negro till his nose bled. Sometimes I don't know why I fly, but I guess I want to do my part to prove that Negroes can do their job as well as whites."

The postwar period and their place in it is their main concern today. Most of them now hope to make aviation their lifetime career. They will be a fiercely disillusioned group if there is an attempt to force them back into the Jim Crow mold.

DARK ANGELS
Defender — Chicago, Ill.

Too often in the matter of racial relations, folks on both sides of the fence have a tendency to build up barriers where none exist. There have been mistakes by both whites and Negroes in their approach. Hate reciprocates with more hate until the lid blows.

11-11-44

The need today seems to be to look for and find more and more ways and means where barriers can be discarded, where fences don't exist. By using these openings, long advances can be made on the path to healthy interracial understanding.

A good example of how racial barriers are built where they have not existed is the Army Air Forces, which at the beginning of the war insisted first on exclusion of Negroes entirely and then later went in for Jim Crow with all its trappings. But the AAF has found that segregation is breaking down, that the best air force is a unified one without regard to color.

How color lines fade under fire is graphically illustrated in a touching war letter in the November Women's Home Companion by a white airman. Here it is:

11-11-44

"Dear Folks: Once upon a time we were headed out toward Naziland and were gazing down upon the stately Alps, when one of our engines decided it wanted to play navy and lay a smoke screen. Now in formation enemy fighters don't have too much of an advantage over our big and slower bombers, but when a lone bomber hangs out there, a single speck in an ocean of sky, the situation is just what they are looking for. With a trail of smoke behind us we made an about face and headed for home, hoping against hope that we would be alone, alone, all, all alone.

11-11-44

"The interphone was alive with silence and ten pairs of eyes were searching the skies anxiously, with hope and that devil fear. Way off on our left and high, a dogfight was going on, we could see the flashes of sunlight as the fighters wheeled and turned in the light of the early morning sun. Our fighter cover, we knew was a bunch of colored boys, self-named The Dark Angels, and we were earnestly wishing they'd keep the enemy occupied so we could get out of there.

"Up in the front part of the ship we watched and waited and flew on. Quite suddenly a speck became a plane and the plane became one of our Dark Angels to escort us home. He flew close off our wing tip and he certainly looked good. If he'd flown any closer I'm certain he'd have had ten eager kisses planted on his dusky brow."

The pilot just signs himself "Bud."

He is indeed a buddie and so are the thousands of other white aviators who have learned by experience that black hands on a fighter plane's controls can mean the difference between life and death for them.

11-11-44

The fellow who said "there are no atheists in fox holes" could very well add an amendment, "There are no race haters in dog fights."

4711944

Colored Flyers Just a Drop in the Bucket

Afro American — Baltimore, Md.

By Staff Correspondent

6-3-44

WASHINGTON.

Of the more than 150,000 pilots trained by the Army Flying Training Command, the colored group can boast of only approximately 441.

Rigid Army censorship prevents giving the exact number, but it is well known that the U.S. now has more than 600 (12 planes each) squadrons taking part in our gigantic 5,000-plane aerial umbrella daily sweeping the skies over Europe.

Latest War Department reports give the colored wing's strength as five squadrons overseas, manned by 175 pilots including fifty or more replacement and returning 99th flyers in transit to or from combat areas.

The War Department now has plans for bringing the All-Colored 477th Medium Bombardment Group up to an activated strength of 60 planes manned by 150 pilots.

It can be easily seen that ours is just a drop in the bucket. According to a War Department spokesman, the reason for the slowness of our jim crow set-up is that all cadets must come from enlisted Air Force personnel and that they are scraping the bottom of the barrel now to fill vacancies at Tuskegee.

The difficulties lies in the fact that colored applicants lack the mechanical and educational opportunities, under jim crow school setups throughout the country, that white applicants get in high school.

6-3-44

Some colored cadet applicants are now being accepted with a passing mark of 3, while whites must make a mark of 6 to get into air training. Here lies the reason for the high rate of eliminations (1,690) at Tuskegee Air Field, where cadets must pass the same examination standards set for the entire Air Force Training Command.

386,700 Pairs of Nylon

Afro-American Balt., Md. 6-3-44

TUSKEGEE ARMY AIR FIELD, Ala. — Girls, here's where they go! There is enough nylon in one army air corps parachute to make 1289 pairs of nylon stockings.

This air field has more than 300 parachutes on hand or 386,700 pairs of nylon hose. Parachutes cost $125 apiece.

30 Get Wings at Tuskegee

AFRO-American Balt. Md.

5-27-44

TUSKEGEE, Ala.—Thirty cadets received second lieutenant's commissions and flying officers received wings at Tuskegee Air Field commencement, Tuesday morning.

Due to increase in length of training period, Col. Noel Parish, commander, said there were no twin engine pilots graduated. These men will finish in all succeeding classes.

Speaker was the former 99th Flight Instructor Capt. Clarence C. Jamison of Cleveland, just home from Italy.

Honor men were: first, Second Lieut. Harry Davenport, Beaumont, Tex.; second. George J. Isles, Quincy, Ill.; third, Robert W. Williams, Ottumwa, Ia.

Others commissioned were:

First Lieut. Wendell M. Lucas, George E. Fairmount Heights, Md.;

Second Lieut. George E. Cisco, Alton, Ill.;

Second Lieut. Keneth M. Wright, Sheridan, Wyo.;

5-27-44

AVIATION CADETS

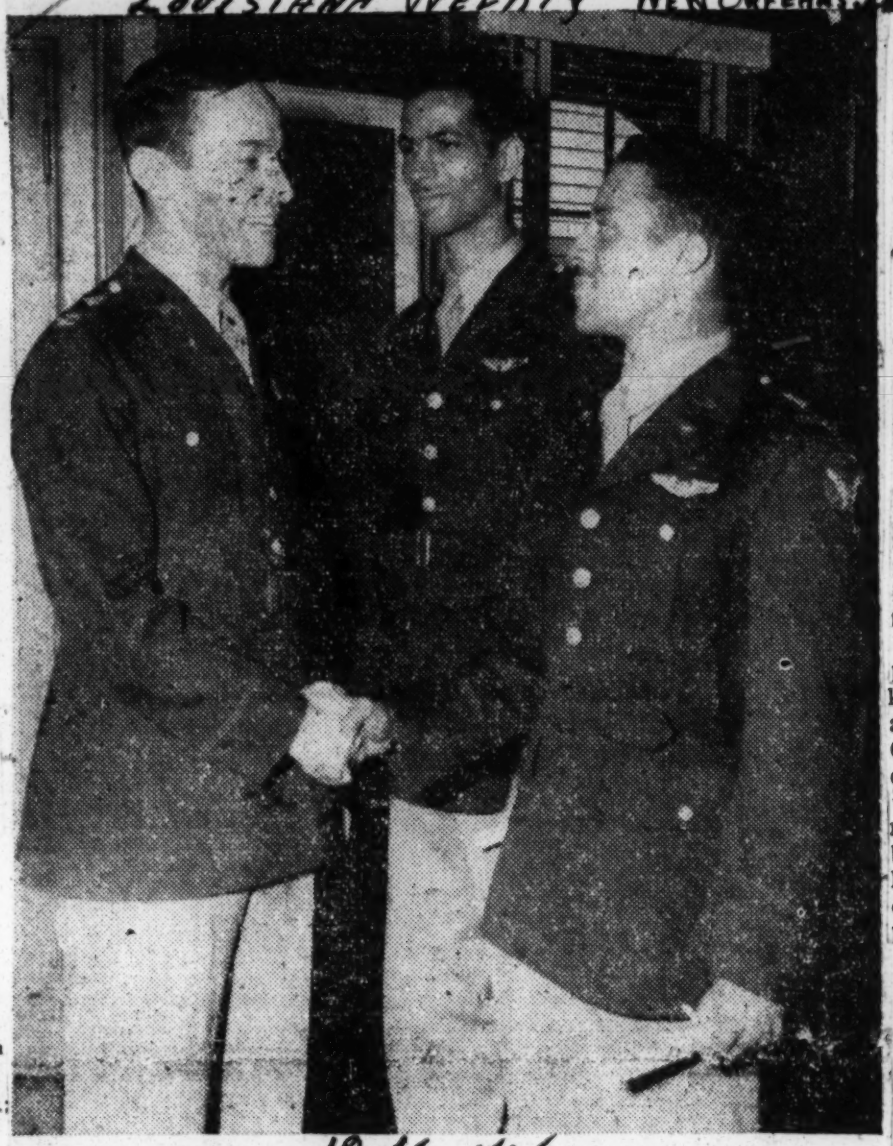
Richard H. Bell, Chicago;
Leonelle A. Bowman, Tuscaloosa Ala.;
Harold H. Brown, Minneapolis;
John W. Davis, Kansas City, Kans.;
George K. Hays, Los Angeles;
Aaron Herrington, Raleigh;
Earl B. Highbough, Indianapolis;
Wendell W. Hockaday, Norfolk;
George J. Isle, Qunicy, Ill.;
Thomas W., Jefferson, Glen Rock, N.J.;
Jimmy Lanham, Philadelphia;
Clarence Oliphant, Council Bluffs, Ia.
Ralph Orderna, Omaha;
Robert A. Tillow,, Nashville;
James C. Ramsey, Augusta;
Leroy Robinson, Jr., Toccoa, Ga.;
Arnett W. Starks, Jr., Los Angeles;
William C. Walker, Jr., Atlantic City;
Samuel W. Watson, Jr., New York;
Ruff W. Williams, Ottumwa, Ia.;
Bertram W. Wilson, Jr., Brooklyn, N.Y.;
Hiram Wright, Los Angeles.

FLIGHT OFFICERS

Charles V. Brantley, St. Louis;
Joseph E. Childworth, Rock Island, Ill.;
Sam J. Foreman, Tulsa;
Thomas L. Hawkins, Glen Rock, N.J.;
Thomas W. Jefferson, Glen Rock N.J.;
Robert A. Tillow, Nashville;
James C. Ramsey, Augusta;
Arnett W. Starks, Los Angeles.

First Negro Service Pilots Receive Wings

Louisiana Weekly New Orleans



Shown receiving congratulations from Col. Noel F. Parrish (left), commanding officer of Tuskegee Army Air Field, Ala., upon becoming the first Negro service pilots to be graduated from the recently activated Basic Instructors' School at Tuskegee Army Air Field, are (left to right): Flight Officers Adolph Moret, Jr., of New Orleans, and James O. Plinton of Westfield, N. J. Other pilots graduating in the same class were Flight Officer Charles W. Stephens of Monroeville, Ala., and 1st Lt. Archie Williams of Oakland, Calif.

12-16-44

Father Of White Air Victim Says Negroes Should Not Fly

Daily World — Atlanta, Ga.

12-23-44

ANNISTON, Ala.—(A N P)—The U. S. government was criticized last week for elevating Negroes to position they are "not yet qualified to perform." The criticism was in the form of a letter written by Earl C. Knodlton, white, grief-stricken father of Lt. Earl C. Knowlton, Jr., who was killed recently when his plane collided in mid air with an army pursuit plane piloted by a Negro. The father is head of the Anniston water works.

"I knew that my boy might have to give his life for his country," wrote the senior Knowlton, "but I expected it to accomplish some useful purpose and not to be sacrificed to the fanatical idea that all men must be allowed to perform on the same level regardless of background qualifications.

HOLDS NO BLAME

"I hold no blame against the Negro who flew a fighter plane into a bomber killing my boy and 11 others. He flew that plane because he was ordered to do so.

"But with all my heart I resent our government's apparent determination to raise the Negro overnight, as it were, to a place in civilization which he is as yet unprepared to assume.

"With rare exceptions his mind is not prepared to make the split-second decisions which mean life or death in the operation of so swift and so complicated and so deadly a mechanism as an airplane.

OFFERED SYMPATHY

12-23-44

"Negroes were among the first to come to my home to offer sympathy in my boy's death. They attended the funeral service. They loved him. He loved them. So, this is not a letter of hate.

"It is the expression of the very deep resentment I feel towards the fetishism of our government in its attitude towards an unnatural and impossibly sudden elevation of the Negro to duties he is not yet qualified to perform."

While the name of the Negro pilot was not revealed, he was killed along with Lt. Knowlton, Jr., and 11 others in the tragedy near Charleston, S. C. Similar air tragedies have occurred to whites as well as Negroes, army air force records show ,although the heart-broken father sent one copy of his letter to the war department and one to the local Star, a daily newspaper.

Norfolk Journal & Guide

Main Speaker, Col. Davis, Not Able Be Present

Norfolk, Va.

12-2-44

Single and Twin Engine Pilots Get Wings At Tuskegee

TUSKEGEE ARMY AIR FIELD, Ala.—Marking the first time in the history of graduating cadet classes here, a large number of fledgling single and twin engine pilots gave advice to their classmates and future flying officers by making impromptu speeches in the absence of the scheduled guest speaker, Col. Benjamin O. Davis Jr., recently returned commanding officer of the 332nd Fighter Group, who was unable to be present.

Col. Noel F. Parrish, post commander, at the opening of the exercises in the Post chapel Monday, Nov. 20, suggested the unique routine before a representative assembly of friends and relatives from all sections of the country were resplendent in their smart new officers uniforms of olive drab. Most dramatic of the series of spontaneous expressions by the newly commissioned pilots was the talk by 2nd Lt. Alvin Jack Johnson of Chicago, Ill., who reminded the audience of their duty on the home front. "It is the duty," he said, "of each of you par-

ASKS HOME SUPPORT

Meeting the exigency of the first signs of cool weather, the proud future combat fliers

ate who praised the efficiency of the United States." The high spirits and

ents, relatives and friends to support your home front by pre-ing deep appreciation for the a place here that we will training he received in the d to return to after the Army Air Forces Training Com- mand was Lt. Eugene Gregory Theodore, native of Trinidad, the other pertinent British West Indies, who stated by the neophite pilots. "I am proud of this opportun- e remarks of one graduty given me by the United praised the efficiency States." The high spirits and of his fellow- won."

enthusiasm of the occasion was highlighted by patriotic melodies rendered by the 54-piece TAAF Band under the direction of Captain Frank L. Drye and the 25-voice Post Glee Club, directed by Lt. James T. Williams.

Among the graduates to be honored for exemplary records during their course of training were: 2nd Lt. Louis W. Johnson, first, of 410 Belmont street, San Antonio, Texas; 2nd Lt. Eugene R. Henderson, second, 1109 West 12th street, Jacksonville, Fla.; and 2nd Lt. William R. Alston, third, 1814 Doulton avenue, Huntington, W. Va.

SINGLE ENGINE GRADUATES

12-2-44

Those completing the prescribed course of instruction as single engine pilots were: 2nd Lts. Halbert L. Alexander, 310 East 13th street, Georgetown, Ill.; William R. Alston, 1814 Doulton avenue, Huntington, W. Va.; Irvin O. Brewin, 5356 Prairie avenue, Chicago, Ill.; Russell W. Carpenter Jr., 225 Summer ave., Plainfield, N. J.; Thomas Gladden, 1650 Harvard street, N. W., Washington, D. C.; Garfield L. Jenkins, 1335 W. 108th place, Chicago, Ill.; Andrew Johnson Jr., 613 Law street, Greensboro, N. C.; Louis W. Johnson, 410 Belmont street, San Antonio, Texas; Willis E. Moore, 5144 South Dearborn street, Chicago; Lincoln W. Nelson, 330 South Bancroft street, San Diego, Calif.; Eugene G. Theodore, 61 Duke street, Port-of-Spain, Trinidad, B. W. I.; William McCurdy Washington, 3627 Prairie avenue, Chicago; and 2nd Lt. Ralph D. Wilkins, 1410 P street, N. W., Washington, D. C.

Flight Officers John J. Bell, 41 Virginia avenue, Jersey City, N. J.; Julius W. Calloway, 3810 Greenwod avenue, Louisville, Ky.; Tamenund J. Dickerson, 9571 Summit street, Detroit, Mich.; Vernon Hopson, 119 Utah street, San Antonio, Texas; Calvin G. Moret, 2180 Law street, New Orleans, La.; Leonard O. Vaughan, 22 Irving place, Brooklyn, N. Y., and Flight Officer Reginald C. Waddell of 362 56th street, Chicago.

TWIN ENGINE GRADUATES

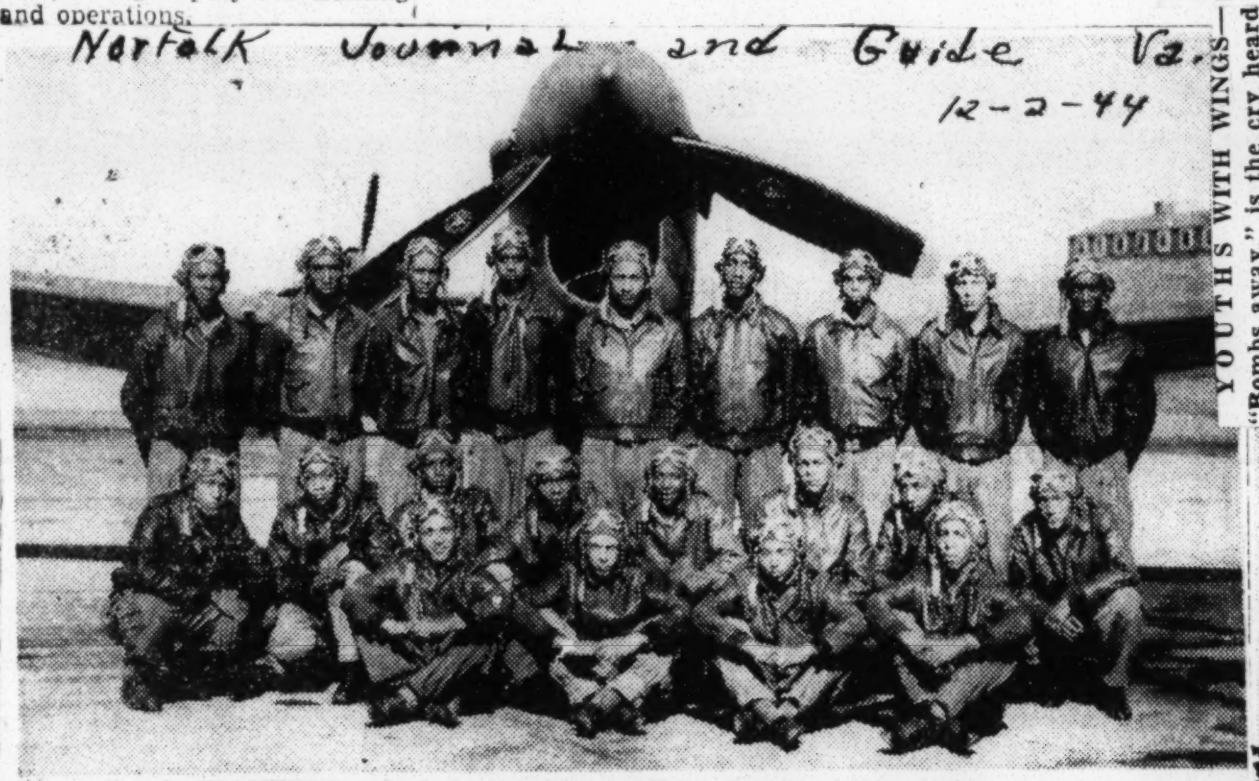
12-2-44

Those completing the prescribed course of instruction as twin engine pilots were: 2nd Lts. Bernard Harris, 3145 Charlevoix avenue, Detroit, Mich.; Eugene R. Henderson, 1109 West 12th street, Jacksonville, Fla.; Voris S. James, 1011 S. Pine street, San Antonio, Texas; James W. Whyte Jr., 444 Orchard street, New Haven, Conn.; and 2nd Lt. Joseph H. Williams of 3633 LaFayette avenue, Chicago.

APPOINTMENTS AND WINGS

Letters of appointment were presented to the newly commissioned officers by Col. Noel F. Parrish, commanding officer of the Tuskegee Army Air Field, and the coveted wings were presented by Major Gabe C. Hawkins, acting deputy for training and operations.

Norfolk Journal and Guide Va.
12-2-44



YOUTHS WITH WINGS—"Bombs away," is the cry heard often over enemy held territory. From such bases of the Training Command as the Tuskegee Army Air Field and many others, the nuclei of bomber groups formulate. These youths, who were at one time participating in many social events of neighborhoods throughout America, are now preparing themselves for the fight to preserve Democracy. Later as bomber pilots, they will be playing an important role in dropping bombs of destruction on the Axis.

Recently at the Tuskegee Army Air Field a number of aviation cadets were awarded their wings and commissions as twin-engine pilots. They are, from left to right, kneeling: 2nd Lt. James W. Whyte, New Haven, Conn.; F/O Raymond M. White, Bronx, N. Y.; F/O Wayman P. Surcey, Jacksonville, Fla.; and F/O Douglas H. McQuillan, Brooklyn, N. Y. Standing: F/O Robert M. Parkey, Des Moines, Iowa; 2nd Lt. Bernard Harris, Detroit, Mich.; 2nd Lt. Eugene R. Henderson, Jacksonville, Fla.; F/O Morris J. Washington, Atlantic City, N. J.; F/O Henry T. Fears, Muncie, Ind.; F/O Charles A. Johnson, Martshall, Texas; 2nd Lt. Joseph H. Williams, Chicago, Ill.; F/O Donald A. Hawkins, San Bernardino, Calif., and 2nd Lt. Voris S. James, San Antonio, Texas. (U. S. AAF Photo)

FUTURE FIGHTERS — In order that Bomber Squadrons can successfully carry out their missions, Fighter Squadrons must accompany the groups and protect them against possible attack by the enemy. Graduating recently as flight pilots at the Tuskegee Army Air Field, these young men will soon be sharing in the fight

They are, from left to right, sitting: 2nd Lt. Halbert L. Alexander, Georgetown, Ill.; F/O Calvin G. Moret, New Orleans, La.; 2nd Lt. Garfield Jenkins, Chicago, Ill.; and 2nd Lt. Eugene G. Theodore, Trinidad, B. W. I.

Stooping: 2nd Lt. William R. Alston, Huntington, W. Va.; F/O John J. Bell, Jersey City, N. J.; 2nd Lt. Ralph D. Wilkins, Hendersonville, N. C.; F/O Vernon Hopson, Gidding, Texas; F/O Reginald Waddell, Chicago, Ill.; 2nd Lt. Willis E. Moore, Chicago, Ill.; 2nd Lt. Andrew Johnson, Greensboro, N. C.; and 2nd Lt. Louis W. Johnson, San Antonio, Texas.

Standing: 2nd Lt. Irvin O. Brewin, Chicago, Ill.; 2nd Lt. Thomas Gladden, Washington, D. C.; 2nd Lt. Lincoln W. Nelson, San Diego, Calif.; F/O Leonard O. Vaughan, Brooklyn, N. Y.; 2nd Lt. Alvin J. Johnson, Chicago, Ill.; 2nd Lt. William M. Washington, Chicago; F/O Julius W. Calloway, Louisville, Ky.; 2nd Lt. Russell W. Carpenter, Plainfield, N. J.; and F/O Tamenund J. Dickerson, Detroit, Mich.

PROTESTS 'ELEVATION' OF NEGRO IN WAR

Times
New York N.Y.

ANNISTON, Ala., Dec. 16 (AP)—Earl C. Knowlton, head of the Anniston water works, whose son Lieut. Earl C. Knowlton Jr., pilot of a B-24 and eleven others were killed in a recent collision between the bomber and a fighter plane piloted by a Negro, who also died, protested the "sudden elevation of the Negro to duties he is not yet qualified to perform" in a letter to The Anniston Star and the War Department.

"I knew that my boy might have to give his life for his country," Mr. Knowlton wrote, "but I expected it to accomplish some useful purpose and not to be sacrificed to the fanatical idea that all men must be allowed to perform on the same level regardless of background qualification."

"I hold no blame against the Negro. * * * He flew that plane because he was ordered to do so. "But, with all my heart, I resent our Government's apparent determination to raise the Negro overnight, as it were, to a place in civilization which he is as yet unprepared to assume.

"Negroes were among the first to come to my home to offer sympathy in my boy's death. They attended the funeral service. They loved him. He loved them. So this is not a letter of hate."

Norfolk Journal & Guide Va. 12-2-44

47a-1944

Easterners Who Received Navigator's Wings at Hondo Army Air Field, Texas

LT. ELLIS J. BAGLEY, New York
LT. CHARLES W. BLAND, Richmond, Va.
LT. WALTER N. BOAGS, Charleston, S.C.
LT. CYRIL O. BURKE, JR., Roxbury, Mass.
F/O GEORGE E. CARROLL, Washington
F/O MARCEL CLYNE, New York City
LT. ALBERT L. GAINES, Buffalo, N.Y.
LT. WALTER H. KYLE, Paterson, N.J.
F/O DANIEL KEEL, Boston
F/O WALTER L. ROBINSON, Reading, Pa.
LT. WILLARD W. SAVOY, Washington
F/O EDWARD R. TABBANOR, New York City
F/O SHELDON R. WEAVER, New York City
LT. JAMES R. WILLIAMS, Wayne, Pa.

Navigators Get Wings

Philadelphia Tribune 12-30-44 Pa.

HONDO ARMY AIR FIELD, Hondo, Texas — Several hundred navigation cadets won silver navigator wings and Army Air Forces commissions at this huge AAF Training Command airbase recently.

Following is a list of Pennsylvania men:

Left to right: Second Lieut. Timothy Ivory, 22, son of Mrs. Mary Ivory, 1008 south Jefferson street, New Castle; Second Lieut. Paul F. Keene, Jr., 21, son of Mr. and Mrs. Paul F. Keene, 1939 Diamond street, Philadelphia; Flight Officer Robert C. Lucas, 19, son of Mr. and Mrs. William H. Lucas, 31 Bigger, Pittsburgh; and Second Lieut. Clendyn C. Sydnor, 20, son of Mr. and Mrs. James Sydnor, 5735 Wyalusing avenue, Philadelphia.

P-47 Pilot, 12 of Bomber Crew Killed in S.C. Crash

Afro American 12-24 Md.

12-23-44

WALTERBORO, S.C. — Blame for an air collision near here on December 5, in which Flight Officer Robert M. Johnson, 19, of Pittsburgh, Pa., and twelve white members of a bomber plane crew were killed, has not been officially placed, it was learned here this week.

No report has yet been made as investigations have not been completed.

Both on Routine Flights

F/O Johnson, attached to the Army air field here, was piloting a P-47 Thunderbolt while the bomber, a B-24, from the Charleston Army Air Base, was piloted by Lt. Earl C. Knowlton of Anniston, Ala. Both were on routine flights.

The crash occurred at 8:20 a.m., ten miles southwest of here. Both planes burned but all bodies were identified and the first of kin notified.

Father Protests

Lieutenant Knowlton's father, in a letter to the War Department and to the Anniston Star, protested the Army's use of colored pilots on the ground that they are "not yet qualified."

"I hold no blame against the colored pilot," he wrote. "He flew that plane because he was ordered to do so. But with all my heart, I resent our government's apparent determination to raise the colored man overnight, as it were, to a place in civilization which he is as yet unprepared to assume.

"With rare exceptions, his mind is not prepared to make the split-second decisions which mean life or death in the operation of so swift and so complicated and so deadly a mechanism as an airplane. . . .

"Some will say that the accident might have happened if a white man had been piloting the fighter plane. That is true. But the percentage against it would have been in my boy's favor."

Letter Called "Unreasonable"

Informed War Department sources describe the Knowlton letter as "unreasonable." It was pointed out that a certain number of training fatalities are to be expected. Countless other tragedies have been recorded in which all of the principals were white.

Roy Wilkins, acting NAACP secretary, said in New York:

"Mr. Knowlton says his letter is not one of hatred, and we believe him, so far as his feelings for this one colored pilot is concerned; but his main thesis, which is that the colored man is still a kind of uncivilized, lower animal incapable of adjusting himself to civilization is an underhand cut at the whole colored race."

Mr. Wilkins cited the record of colored combat pilots overseas, as proof that they are capable of making split-second decisions "at more than 400 miles an hour."

At the War Department in Washington there was no comment. A spokesman said that he did not know whether the letter had been received but that if it came in, it would be answered.

99th Pilot captured by Germans; freed by Russians

Tribune — Los Angeles, Calif.
12-18-44

WASHINGTON—First Lt. Henry A. Wise, 24, of Cape Charles, Va., a veteran flier of the 99th Pursuit Squadron, who had been forced down over Bulgaria and taken prisoner by the Germans, related his experiences before 3000 government workers last week at three separate midnight War Bond rallies sponsored by the Federal Works Agency, in connection with the 6th War Loan campaign.

According to Lt. Wise, he was flying his 13th mission and was piloting a P-51 Mustang fighter as an escort for one of the last bombing trips made from Italian bases to the Ploesti oil fields in Russia when it happened.

"We were on the way back," he said, "and my mind was on the doughnuts and coffee that would be waiting for me when I landed. Suddenly, engine trouble developed in my ship, and I was forced to bail out. I did, and landed in Bulgaria some 400 miles from my base. It was German territory, and when I hit the ground the Bulgarian soldiers were waiting for me. They made me a prisoner."

Lt. Wise, who wears the Air Medal and Purple Heart Awards, explained that he was not free to explain developments after that, but did give "thanks to the Russians that I wasn't there long." He was among the Allied fliers who were repatriated when the Russians moved into that area. However, that was not before 3500 American airmen and 350 aircraft had been lost on this run, he said.

The young flier said that while overseas he saw a hospital in which it seemed that assorted amputations were the only cases handled, and he began to whether he was doing all he could in the fight. "If it's a matter of a bond or a few stamps, is that too much if it will hasten the return of the boys who are over there doing a grand job?" he asked.

Pursuit Of Democracy

U. S. Racial Pattern Stubbornly Observed On the Battlefront

By MARJORIE McKENZIE

(The views expressed in this column are those of the writer and do not necessarily express the editorial opinion of The Pittsburgh Courier.—The Editors.)

PRESUMABLY the story of the U. S. Army vs. the Negro soldier is, mildly speaking, a twice-told tale, unequal to newly horrendous sequels. But a foreign correspondent of the New York Times has sent out a release from the Italian front about the 92nd Division that is a fresh revelation of the fundamental mind set of American racial attitudes.

I would like to go over the harrowed ground of Army policy, already traversed by a multitude of complaints, except that this Times article of November 1, concerns the progress and development of the first Negro infantry combat unit to meet the Germans in the European theatre.

Miss McKenzie

It is reported that the overall principle of race relations established for the unit by its Maj. Gen. Edward M. Almond (of Virginia) is that the development of the new outfit was a military, not a sociological problem. This approach, says the Times, was bound to "cut corners," but one happy result of it is that Lieut. Gen. Mark W. Clark, commander of the Fifth Army, feels that there is no problem of race relations in his forces.

CITES CONDITIONS

Within this military framework, supposedly untouched by racial problems, these conditions exist:

1. The 92nd has a white colonel and lieutenant colonel.

2. None of the numerous Negro company officers, captains and lieutenants, ranks with white junior officers, nor does the colonel (also from Virginia) foresee a day when any will.

3. Negro GIs are not permitted to carry knives except the unconcealed regular issue bayonet.

4. Military police patrol in pairs, one white and one colored, each handling his own men. The Negro MPs are all over six feet AND DO NOT CARRY PISTOLS, BUT USE A SHORT CLUB.

5. There is no official segregation, but the Times correspondent noted that Negro officers "went to one table" about which the divisional general commented that he didn't try to "choose an officer's friends for him."

6. Some white officers said that some Negro infantrymen tended to "panic" more easily than whites and that the superstition and ignorance of Southern "boys" could not be ignored.

7. Other, more "responsible" white officers said the greatest problem of Negro combat troops was inexperience against a foe as tough as the Germans.

UNLESS the Times correspondent is an ingenuous windbag, a doubtful supposition, then the purpose of his article must be to enrage the American people. For he is pointing out to them that men who are fighting and dying with Negro troops enhance the mutual risk and prolong the war by their stubborn observance of the niceties of racial etiquette.

MUST SEE OUR PROBLEM IN WORLD CONTEXT

If there exists a spark of the moral responsibility in Americans on which Gunnar Myrdal postulates his "American Dilemma," here is the chance for it to operate. Are Negro MPs to oppose with six feet of brawn and a club the swift whistle of a bullet in the night? Is a whole division of men to be denied the leadership and protection of a skilled, courageous officer because his promotion would offend a little white shavetail? May no Negro GI cut his way through underbrush to an enemy position and quietly plunge his knife in the back of a German superman? Must line officers who have shared the blood and danger of the battle field, each protecting the other from the impersonal ammmunition of the foe, so forget at night the brotherhood of the day that they cannot share a meal? Surely Amerida does not fight to preserve such ideas in her culture. If she does, then the Negro must resign himself to the futility of believing that he fights for freedom or that alone, as a minority, he can obtain it.

THERE can be no clearer illustration than this parable about the 92nd Division of the fact that a culture must be ready to accept changes which will resolve its contradictions or else must be prepared for those changes by the combined forces of liberal groups of all colors who can recognize the threat inherent in a refusal to change. This requires, in turn, of us that we see our problems in the full context of world rehabilitation and that we bring to their solution in place of racial striving, greater political knowledge and ideological integrity.

Selfridge Field Pilot Killed In Plane Crash

SELFRIDGE FIELD, Mich. (ANP)—A Selfridge Field pilot was killed in the crash of his one seater fighter plane at 11:30 a.m. Tuesday, 12 miles north of this army air base.

The pilot was 2nd Lt. Cornelius F. May, 22, a son of Mrs. M. E. May, Nashville, who was notified of the fatal accident. Lt. May had been stationed at Selfridge Field since Nov. 1. He was commissioned October 1 following eight months training at Tuskegee Army Air Field. He was educated in Nashville and was a chemistry student at Fisk University at time he entered the army.

A board of qualified officers was appointed to investigate the cause of the accident which occurred during a combat training flight.

47a-1944

Journal + Guide — Norfolk, Va.

4-22-44

ANOTHER THREAT TO THE AXIS—The AAF Training Command School for Negro pilots at Tuskegee, Ala., continues to turn out large groups of flyers. The latest contingent shown in the picture represents the most recent class of Army aviators to complete their training at Tuskegee Army Air Field. Shown, first row, left to right: 2nd Lt. Myron Wilson, Danville, Ill.; 2nd Lt. Harold M. Morris, Seattle, Wash.; Flight Officer Rual W. Bell, Portland, Ore.; 2nd Lt. Carrol H. Robinson, Atlanta, Ga.; 2nd Lt. Jimmie D. Wheeler, Detroit, Mich.; 2nd Lt. Roland W. Moody, Cambridge, Mass.; Flight Officer Ralph L. Turner, Los Angeles, Calif.; 2nd Lt. James A. Wilson, Marion, Ind.; and 2nd Lt. Lloyd R. Shults, North Plainfield, N. J.

2nd row—2nd Lts. Daniel L. Rich, Rutherford, N. J.; Harvey R. Alexander, Georgetown, Ill.; Lewis W. Craig, Asheville, N. C.; Henry R. Peoples, St. Louis, Mo.; Augustus Cousins Jr., Toledo, Ohio; Gentry E. Barnes, Lawrenceville, Ill.; Flight Officer Carl J. Woods, Mars, Pa.; Major E. Jones, Cleveland, Ohio; Francis B. Peoples, Henderson, N. C.; and William C. Coleman, Detroit, Mich. 4-22-44

3rd row—2nd Lt. Celestus King, Los Angeles, Calif.; 2nd Lt. Walter P. Manning, Philadelphia, Pa.; Flight Officer Charles L. Jackson, Circleville, Ohio; 2nd Lt. Earl R. Lane, Wickliffe, Ohio; 2nd Lt. Robert D. Anderson, Indianapolis, Ind.; 2nd Lt. Virgil Brashear Jr., Kansas, Mo.; 2nd Lt. Paul L. Moody, Cambridge, Mass.; Flight Officer Vincent I. Mitchell, Mt. Clemens, Mich.; 2nd Lt. George H. Kydd III, Charleston, W. Va.; 2nd Lt. Hannibal M. Cox, Chicago, Ill.; 2nd Lt. Milton S. Hays, Los Angeles, Calif.; and Flight Officer Martin L. Cooke, Purcellville, Va. (Photo by AAF Training Command)

99th Pilot Addresses

Defender — Chicago, Ill.

TAAF Graduating Class

6-10-44

TUSKEGEE ARMY AIR FIELD, Ala. — Capt. Clarence C. Jamison, former 99th Fighter Squadron flight leader, spoke briefly of his experiences in the North African and Italian Campaigns to the latest graduating class of pilots at the Tuskegee Army Air Field in the Post Chapel.

Recently assigned to TAAF as a transition instructor for single engine pilots, the 26-year-old Cleveland, Ohio, flyer recounted some colorful experiences that he and the other members of the crack all-Negro fighter outfit underwent while overseas.

Among the graduates of this class, which included representatives from over twenty states were First Lieut. Wendell M. Lucas, Fairmount Heights, Md.; Second Lieut. George E. Cisco, Alton, Ill.; and Second Lieut. Kenneth M. Wright of Sheridan, Wyo.; Second Lts. Richard H. Bell, Chicago, Ill.; Leonelle A. Bonam, Pascagoula, Miss.; Harold H. Brown, Minneapolis, Minn.; Harry J. Davenport, Jr., Beaumont, Texas; John W. Davis, Kansas City, Kansas; Louis K. Harris, St. Louis, Mo.; George K. Hayes, Los Angeles, Calif.; Aaron Herrington, Raleigh, N. C.; Earl B. Highbaugh, Indianapolis, Ind.; Wendell W. Hockaday, Norfolk, Va.; George J. Iles, Quincy, Ill.; Jimmy Lanham, Philadelphia, Pa.; Clarence A. Olibhant, Council Bluffs, Iowa.; Ralph Orduna, Omaha, Nebr.; Leroy Roberts, Jr., Tocca, Ga.; William C. Walker, Jr., Atlantic City, N. J.; Samuel W. Watts, New York, N Y.; Robert W. Williams, Ottumwa, Iowa, and Bertram W. Wilson, Jr., of Brooklyn, New York. 6-10-44

Others completing the AAF Training Command course of instruction for single engine pilots at the Tuskegee Army Air Field and receiving appointments as flight officers were Charles V. Brantley, St. Louis, Mo.; Joseph E. Chinworth, Memphis, Tenn.; Samuel J. Foreman, Tulsa, Okla.; Thomas W. Jefferson, Glen Rock, N. J.; Robert A. Pillow, Jr., Chicago; James C. Ramsey, Augusta, Ga.; Arnett W. Sparks, Jr., Los Angeles, Calif.; and Hiram Wright of Los Angeles, Calif.

16 Pilots Join

Afro American

Fighter Group

Baltimore, Md.

Nazis Avoid Combat with Our Flyers

3 MADE CAPTAINS

Air Medals Go to 4 from East, 3 Others

By MAX JOHNSON

AFRO War Correspondent with U.S. Troops in Italy

[Copyright. Reproduction in whole or in part expressly forbidden.]

8-12-44

ADVANCED AIR BASE IN ITALY — Seven Easterners are among a group of sixteen replacement pilots who this week joined the fighter group here commanded by Col. Benjamin O. Davis.

They are Lts. Roger Gaiter, Seaside Heights, N.J.; Joseph E. Gordon and Richard Harder, Brooklyn, N.Y.; Wilbert F. Long, New Rochelle, N.Y.; Henry A. Wise, Jr., Cheriton, Va., and Marion R. Rogers, Elizabeth, N.J.

Others arriving are: Lts. William Campbell, Tuskegee; Herbert V. Clark, Pine Bluff, Ark.; Emile G. Clifton, San Francisco; Richard D. Macon, Birmingham; Thomas G. Patton, Nashville; Quitman C. Walker, Indianola, Miss.; Sheldy F. Westbrook, Toledo, Ohio; Kenneth I. Williams, Los Angeles, and Robert B. Chandeler, Allegan, Mich.

SOME COMING HOME

The newcomers have been added to the pioneer squadron in the group, bringing it up to full strength and allowing relief for some of the older members who are expected to go home on rotation soon. 8-12-44

Flying bomber-escort missions Wednesday and Thursday to Southern France and the area around Friedrichshafen, Germany, members of the group encountered no enemy fighters.

The 15th Army Air Force's B-17's and B-24's dropped thousands of bombs on oil refineries and other enemy installations under protective cover of the group's P-51 Mustang escort.

Enemy Planes Flee

Some enemy aircraft were sighted on one occasion, but quickly disappeared when one flight in the group started in their direction.

few seconds, the skies literally exploded with flame spitting fighters.

SPOTTED TWO NAZI BOMBERS

Lieutenant Harris spotted two Nazi bandits working over a desperately twisting Liberator and, pulling over in a tight turn, dived in on them and broke up the attack. But fighter ships travel at such blinding speeds that when Harris pulled out of his dive there wasn't another fighter companion in sight. 8-5-44

In front of him, however, there was a Liberator with smoke pouring from one of her engines, and two others apparently knocked out. Now, any fighter pilot will tell you that a single fighter ship in enemy infested territory is simply a cooked goose, and the first rule in the combat manual tells him to find companions as quickly as possible.

READY TO CRASH

But there was that crippled bomber. So Harris flew in close to get a better look. The frightened turret gunner in the bomber fired a warning burst at him. Harris wagged his wings to indicate that he was on the same team. Pulling his ship in close and leveling off, he tried to pick up the bomber with his radio.

Strained, anxious faces peered out through the plexi-glass of the bomber as they signalled with their hands that all their instruments were dead and that they were going to crash land on the French countryside. 8-5-44

Harris sized the situation up quickly and noticed that smoke was no longer pouring from the engine. He signalled to the men

Brotherly Love. . . Across The Ocean

Race Pilot Leads Crippled B-24 To Safety, Gets Kiss From Texan

Courier — Pittsburgh, Pa. 8-15-44

By OLLIE HARRINGTON, Courier War Correspondent

AN ADVANCED AIRDROME IN ITALY—Lieut. Maceo A. Harris, Boston, Mass., can't quite make out what the excitment is all about especially when in his P-51 group talk about the possibility of his receiving a decoration. As far as he is concerned, he found himself in a spot at a certain time and he simply did what any good fighter pilot would have done under the circumstances.

But Lieutenant Harris just happens to be a rather modest young fellow and to get the real story you would have to get to any bomber field in that particular patt of Italy where any pilot or the Liberators were out probing, any-flying GI will tell you how quick thinking pilot with more than his share of guts pulled one

of our four-motored bombers and her crew of ten men out of a tough spot. NAZIS MET THEM 8-5-44

It happened over Southern France one soupy morning with to get the heavies a ring.

Diving ferociously, the Mustangs of the Nazi fighters swarmed upstairs to give the heavies a ring. Diving ferocious screens of blistering tracer fire between the Messerschmitt and the pea-soup, but it was hell when the 109's and our bombers, and in a tough enough flying formation in tough enough flying formation in the ceiling menacingly low and vis-ibility almost zero. The big B-24 put up screens of their cover. It was simply did what any fighter group

47a-1944

Journal + Guide — Norfolk, Va.

4-22-44

ANOTHER THREAT TO THE AXIS—The AAF Training Command School for Negro pilots at Tuskegee, Ala., continues to turn out large groups of flyers. The latest contingent shown in the picture represents the most recent class of Army aviators to complete their training at Tuskegee Army Air Field. Shown, first row, left to right: 2nd Lt. Myron Wilson, Danville, Ill.; 2nd Lt. Harold M. Morris, Seattle, Wash.; Flight Officer Rual W. Bell, Portland, Ore.; 2nd Lt. Carrol H. Robinson, Atlanta, Ga.; 2nd Lt. Jimmie D. Wheeler, Detroit, Mich.; 2nd Lt. Roland W. Moody, Cambridge, Mass.; Flight Officer Ralph L. Turner, Los Angeles, Calif.; 2nd Lt. James A. Wilson, Marion, Ind.; and 2nd Lt. Lloyd R. Shults, North Plainfield, N. J.

2nd row—2nd Lts. Daniel L. Rich, Rutherford, N. J.; Harvey R. Alexander, Georgetown, Ill.; Lewis W. Craig, Asheville, N. C.; Henry R. Peoples, St. Louis, Mo.; Augustus Cousins Jr., Toledo, Ohio; Gentry E. Barnes, Lawrenceville, Ill.; Flight Officer Carl J. Woods, Mars, Pa.; Major E. Jones, Cleveland, Ohio; Francis B. Peoples, Henderson, N. C.; and William C. Coleman, Detroit, Mich. 4-22-44

3rd row—2nd Lt. Celestus King, Los Angeles, Calif.; 2nd Lt. Walter P. Manning, Philadelphia, Pa.; Flight Officer Charles L. Jackson, Circleville, Ohio; 2nd Lt. Earl R. Lane, Wickliffe, Ohio; 2nd Lt. Robert D. Anderson, Indianapolis, Ind.; 2nd Lt. Virgil Brashear Jr., Kansas, Mo.; 2nd Lt. Paul L. Moody, Cambridge, Mass.; Flight Officer Vincent I. Mitchell, Mt. Clemens, Mich.; 2nd Lt. George H. Kydd III, Charleston, W. Va.; 2nd Lt. Hannibal M. Cox, Chicago, Ill.; 2nd Lt. Milton S. Hays, Los Angeles, Calif.; and Flight Officer Martin L. Cooke, Purcellville, Va. (Photo by AAF Training Command)

99th Pilot Addresses

Defender — Chicago, Ill.

TAAF Graduating Class

6-10-44

TUSKEGEE ARMY AIR FIELD, Ala. — Capt. Clarence C. Jamison, former 99th Fighter Squadron flight leader, spoke briefly of his experiences in the North African and Italian Campaigns to the latest graduating class of pilots at the Tuskegee Army Air Field in the Post Chapel.

Recently assigned to TAAF as a transition instructor for single engine pilots, the 26-year-old Cleveland, Ohio, flyer recounted some colorful experiences that he and the other members of the crack all-Negro fighter outfit underwent while overseas.

Among the graduates of this class, which included representatives from over twenty states were First Lieut. Wendell M. Lucas, Fairmount Heights, Md.; Second Lieut. George E. Cisco, Alton, Ill.; and Second Lieut. Kenneth M. Wright of Sheridan, Wyo.; Second Lts. Richard H. Bell, Chicago, Ill.; Leonelle A. Bonam, Pascagoula, Miss.; Harold H. Brown, Minneapolis, Minn.; Harry J. Davenport, Jr., Beaumont, Texas; John W. Davis, Kansas City, Kansas; Louis K. Harris, St. Louis, Mo.; George K. Hayes, Los Angeles, Calif.; Aaron Herrington, Raleigh, N. C.; Earl B. Highbaugh, Indianapolis, Ind.; Wendell W. Hockaday, Norfolk, Va.; George J. Iles, Quincy, Ill.; Jimmy Lanham, Philadelphia, Pa.; Clarence A. Olibhant, Council Bluffs, Iowa.; Ralph Orduna, Omaha, Nebr.; Leroy Roberts, Jr., Tocca, Ga.; William C. Walker, Jr., Atlantic City, N. J.; Samuel W. Watts, New York, N Y.; Robert W. Williams, Ottumwa, Iowa, and Bertram W. Wilson, Jr., of Brooklyn, New York. 6-10-44

Others completing the AAF Training Command course of instruction for single engine pilots at the Tuskegee Army Air Field and receiving appointments as flight officers were Charles V. Brantley, St. Louis, Mo.; Joseph E. Chinworth, Memphis, Tenn.; Samuel J. Foreman, Tulsa, Okla.; Thomas W. Jefferson, Glen Rock, N. J.; Robert A. Pillow, Jr., Chicago; James C. Ramsey, Augusta, Ga.; Arnett W. Sparks, Jr., Los Angeles, Calif.; and Hiram Wright of Los Angeles, Calif.

16 Pilots Join

Afro American

Fighter Group

Baltimore, Md.

Nazis Avoid Combat with Our Flyers

3 MADE CAPTAINS

Air Medals Go to 4 from East, 3 Others

By MAX JOHNSON

AFRO War Correspondent with U.S. Troops in Italy

[Copyright. Reproduction in whole or in part expressly forbidden.]

8-12-44

ADVANCED AIR BASE IN ITALY — Seven Easterners are among a group of sixteen replacement pilots who this week joined the fighter group here commanded by Col. Benjamin O. Davis.

They are Lts. Roger Gaiter, Seaside Heights, N.J.; Joseph E. Gordon and Richard Harder, Brooklyn, N.Y.; Wilbert F. Long, Newrochelle, N.Y.; Henry A. Wise, Jr., Cheriton, Va., and Marion R. Rogers, Elizabeth, N.J.

Others arriving are: Lts. William Campbell, Tuskegee; Herbert V. Clark, Pine Bluff, Ark.; Emile G. Clifton, San Francisco; Richard D. Macon, Birmingham; Thomas G. Patton, Nashville; Quitman C. Walker, Indianola, Miss.; Sheldy F. Westbrook, Toledo, Ohio; Kenneth I. Williams, Los Angeles, and Robert G. Chandeler, Allegan, Mich.

SOME COMING HOME

The newcomers have been added to the pioneer squadron in the group, bringing it up to full strength and allowing relief for some of the older members who are expected to go home on rotation soon. 8-12-44

Flying bomber-escort missions Wednesday and Thursday to Southern France and the area around Friedrichshafen, Germany, members of the group encountered no enemy fighters.

The 15th Army Air Force's B-17's and B-24's dropped thousands of bombs on oil refineries and other enemy installations under protective cover of the group's P-51 Mustang escort.

Enemy Planes Flee

Some enemy aircraft were sighted on one occasion, but quickly disappeared when one flight in the group started in their direction.

Brotherly Love. . . Across The Ocean

Race Pilot Leads Crippled B-24 To Safety, Gets Kiss From Texan

Courier — Pittsburgh, Pa. 8-5-44

By OLLIE HARRINGTON, Courier War Correspondent

AN ADVANCED AIRDROME IN ITALY—Lieut. Maceo A. Harris, Boston, Mass., can't quite make out what the excitment is all about, especially when the other pilots in his P-51 group talk about the possibility of his receiving a decoration. As far as he is concerned, he found himself in a spot it a certain time and he simply did what any good fighter pilot would have done under the circumstances.

But Lieutenant Harris just happens to be a rather modest young fellow and to get the real story you would have to get to any France one soupy morning with bomber field in that particular part of Italy where any pilot or the ceiling mena ingly low and visibility almost zero. flying GI will tell you how the Liberators were out probing, any-bullets between the Messerschmitt quick thinking pilot with more how, for a vital target and the 109's and our bombers, and in a than his share of guts pulled one few seconds, the skies literally exploded with flame spitting fighters.

SPOTTED TWO NAZI BOMBERS

Lieutenant Harris spotted two Nazi bandits working over a desperately twisting Liberator and pulling over in a tight turn, dived in on them and broke up the attack. But fighter ships travel at such blinding speeds that when Harris pulled out of his dive there wasn't another fighter companion in sight. 8-5-44

In front of him, however, there was a Liberator with smoke pouring from one of her engines, and two others apparently knocked out. Now, any fighter pilot will tell you that a single fighter ship in enemy infested territory is simply a cooked goose, and the first rule in the combat manual tells him to find companions as quickly as possible.

READY TO CRASH

But there was that crippled bomber. So Harris flew in close to get a better look. The frightened turret gunner in the bomber fired a warning burst at him. Harris wagged his wings to indicate that he was on the same team. Pulling his ship in close and leveling off, he tried to pick up the bomber with his radio.

Strained, anxious faces peered out through the plexi-glass of the bomber as they signalled with their hands that all their instruments were dead and that they were going to crash land on the French countryside. 8-5-44

Harris sized the situation up quickly and noticed that smoke was no longer pouring from the engine. He signalled to the men

in the bomber that he thought they could make it back home on two engines. Then, turning his ship in the direction of Corsica, he set the course for them.

STUCK WITH BOMBER

The bomber pilot shook his head in understanding and gingerly turned the groaning ship in the direction indicated by Harris. To make a long story short, the Liberator somehow stayed in one piece with the little fellow hovering over his badly mauled big brother ready to fight off anyhting that threatened it. 8-5-44

It would have been suicide if Nazi fighters had spotted them. but Harris stuck and carried the Liberator into Corsica and safety over the first friendly airdrome. He realized that it was impossible for the bomber to signal the control tower and that she had to land quickly, and so he dived his fighter almost down on the landing strip and buzzed the field twice.

The ground crews understood and stood by for a crash landing as the straining B-24 roared in on her belly to a lurching stop. The little Mustang, low on gas, roared in behind her and the bewildered ground crew men were startled by the spectacle of the pilot- co-pilot and navigator of the bomber rushing to the fighter plane to pull the tired Negro pilot from the cockpit and clasp him in their arms while the turret gunner kissed him on both cheeks. And the turret gunner was from Texas.

PROBE "BAN" ON KY. AIR CADETS

Chicago Defender
Chicago, Ill.

LOUISVILLE — Although members of one of the best drilled Civil Air Patrol units in the state, two Negro girl cadets were told recently by Bowman Field instructors, "we won't teach colored to fly." 12-2-44

Roger Shupp, manager of the field, has announced that the Louisville and Jefferson County Air board will investigate the case of the teen-age cadets on December 5. W. C. Thompson, flight school operator, admitted that the two girls had been refused a 6-minute flight on November 12 because "pleasure" flights are no longer allowed."

Herbert Rayner, white commander of the local CAP Negro unit, composed of Central high school youngsters of 15 to 18 years of age, declared refusal of the instructors to fly his charges "is a crying shame." 12-2-44

"They are as fine a bunch of children as I've ever seen or known anywhere," Rayner said. "I was tickled to death to get the command. And you can bet I was especially pleased when those kids after only eleven weeks' training, won a cup in the annual demonstration for being the best-drilled unit. Remember, they were up against units that had drilled for a couple of years—and they ran away with it!"

Tuskegee "Wamaviks"--1944 Version

Tribune — Philadelphia, Pa. 10-28-44

Recently members of the Army Air Forces were given the authorization to organize and train its men who were interested in football. The Tuskegee Army Air Field began training its former collegiate and exhigh school stars under the supervision of Lt. William (Big Bill) Bell, former All-American tackle for Ohio State University, and coach of Howard University and Florida A. and M. College. The aggregation under the tutoring of Lt. Bell and and his assistants have been worked into a versatile eleven that will encounter Daniel Field of Augusta, Georgia on Sunday, October 29 at Rickwood Stadium, Birmingham, Alabama. November 4, the airmen will play Mac Dill Field in Tampa, Florida, and November 11, the TAAF men will meet Morgan College in the Capitol Classics at Washington, D. C. Their first game with Alabama State College was won by a score of 21-0, and the second with Columbus Army Field, by a score of 40-0. Shown from left to right are: First row.—S. Sgt. Earl C. Smith, Philadelphia, Pa.; Pvt. Edward Bishop, Brooklyn, N. Y.; Sgt. Joe Allen, Columbus, Ga.; Cpl. William Good, Indianapolis, Ind.; Lt. Thomas Mayfield, Shinnston, West Va.; Pvt. Robert Carson, Louisville, Ky.; Sgt. Delbert Roberts, Fostorio, Ohio; Lt. Curtis Chears, Chicago, Illinois; Lt. Lonis Ballard, Philadelphia, Pa.; Pvt. Phail Wynn, Wichita, Kansas; and Pvt. Lorenzo Carter, Hamilton, Ohio. Second row—Cpl. Porter Myrick, Chicago, Ill.; Cpl. Ernest Hill, Los Angeles, Cal.; Pvt. Alfred Martin, San Antonio, Texas; Lt. Walter Moore, Winthrope, Mass.; Cpl. Kenneth Hernandez, Oakland, Cal.; Pvt. John Stewart, Gary, West Va.; Lt. Robert Gill, Charleston, South Carolina; Lt. Robert Gardner, St. Paul, Minn.; Pfc. James Russel Massillon, Ohio; Lt. James Mosley Philadelphia, Pa.; and S-Sgt. Christopher Copeland, Norfolk, Va. Third row—T.-Sgt. Reubin Bremond, Austin, Texas; Sgt.e Dwight Osborne, Bells VeVrnon, Pa.; Lt. William Hudgins, Hampton, Va.; Lt. Samuel Pickens, Los Angeles, Cal.; Pfc. Robert Shield, Elizabeth City, North Carolina; Cpl. Robert Mike, Steubenville, Ohio; Lt. Ira J. O'Neal, Phoenix, Ariz.; Cpl. Lee Taylor, Akron, Ohio; Pvt. Walter Green, Hartford, Conn:; Pvt. Fitzhugh Banks, Los Angeles, Cal.; Pvt. JJohn Hicks, Los Angeles, Cal.; and Lt. Eldridge Williams, Kansas City, Fourth row—Lt. Williams (Big Bill) Bell (coach), Arkon, Ohio; Archie Harris line coach), Ocean City, N. J.; S-Sgt. Theodore Napper, Hartford, oCnn.; Lt. Robert Campbell, Detroit, Michigan; Cpl. Alphonso Logan (back field coach), Hot Springs, Ark.; Lt. Franklin Woods, Cordele, Ga.; Lt. James Knighten, Tulsa, Ohla.; S-Sgt. Alpheus DuVal, (line coach), Los Angeles, Cal.; M-Sgt. Jerry Williams, Cleveland, Ohio; Pvt. Wilbur Hughes, Detroit, Michigan; S-Sgt. Rudolph Sablo, New York, N. Y.; Cpl. Littleton Mitchell water boy), Wilmington, Del.; and Pfc. Milton Riddick, Philadelphia, Pa. (Official U. S. AAF Photo by AAF Training Command.)

PILOT CRASHES AT TUSKEGEE

Ill. 5-18-44
Chicago Defender

TUSKEGEE ARMY AIR FIELD, —Second Lieutenant Francis B. Peoples, 24, of 308 Parkspring street, Henderson, N.C., was killed Thursday while making a routine combat training mission at Tuskegee Army Air Field. The young pilot was flying in a P-40 fighter plane. A board of qualified Army Air Force officers has been appointed to investigate and determine the exact cause of the accident.

Lieutenant Peoples was a former student at Hampton Institute where he was well known in athletic circles. He was a member of the latest class of pilots to graduate from Tuskegee Army Air Field, and was commissioned on April 15, 1944. His wife is the former Lucille C. Jones, 75 West 141st street, New York City, and his parents reside at 308 Rockspring street, Henderson, N.C.

Before his career as an aviation cadet, Lieutenant Peoples was a driver and a gunner in the 758th Tank Battalion, Camp Hood, Texas.

Fliers Chalk Up 100th Mission With 15th AAF

Pittsburgh Courier — Pa.
11-18-44

15th AAF IN ITALY—The all-Negro Fighter Group, commanded by Col. B. O. Davis, Jr., "chalked up" its 100th mission flown against the enemy, with the 15th Air Force recently, when it provided escort for heavy bombers to their target in Gyor, Hungary.

The group began operations with the 15th Air Force on June 7, while still flying P-47 "Thunderbolts." Soon after its initiation into the 15th Air Force the group changed to its present type of fighter, the P-51 Mustang. Mission assignments have been varied slightly, but bomber escort has been the principal task. The group has participated in strafing attacks, provided air-sea rescue, and escorted C-47's evacuating Allied airmen from enemy occupied countries.

Pilots of the group have been awarded eight Distinguished Flying Crosses, one Legion of Merit, and over 100 Air Medals and Clusters. The group has destroyed 75 enemy aircraft in aerial combat, 17 of which were destroyed while the group was with the 12th Air Force. It has destroyed 214 enemy aircraft on the ground as well as a large amount of rolling stock.

Pilots of the group also hold the distinction of having sunk an enemy destroyer, which was sighted and bombed in the harbor of Frieste on June 25. The group has often been paid visits by bomber personnel of the 15th Air Force Bomb groups, who wished to express their appreciation for the fine escort work done by the Negro pilots. 11-18-44

Under the skillful guidance of Colonel Davis, the pilots of this group have moulded themselves into a combat team, with one express purpose: "To keep the bombers flying and the Allies winning."

47a-1944

Group In Thunderbolts Protect U. S. Bombers Attacking Naziland

Journal + Guide — Norfolk, Va.

4-17-44

By Lem Graves Jr., Guide War Correspondent
(Copyright: Reproduction Forbidden)

ADVANCED ALLIED AIR BASE, Italy—(By Radio)—Brilliantly led by Colonel Benjamin O. Davis Jr., fliers of the Negro Fighter Group scored a great triumph on Friday while escorting bombers into Germany itself, knocking down five Nazi planes during blazing dogfights. Flying the deadly P-47 Thunderbolt, a high altitude, long range fighter plane, five of our boys attached to the group in a 34 ship wave erased the Germans from the air. One of them, 2nd Lt. Frederick L. Funderburg, 2310 West Turner street, Philadelphia, accounted for two of the five victories, to match the one-day record for a Negro aviator, set on January 28 by Captain Charles B. Hall of the 99th Fighter Squadron, the pioneer outfit of colored pilots.

THEIR BIGGEST DAY

This biggest day for the Fighter Group since it arrived in this theatre of war last February, was its third mission during which it flew Thunderbolts as part of the 15th Strategic Air Force.

6-17-44

Previously the group pilots had been doing coastal patrol with the P-39 Airacobras.

GRAVES

Lt. Funderburg, who scored two of the five victories, was one of the newest replacement pilots to be assigned to the group subsequent to its arrival here.

The group's first two missions were uneventful, then came the third mission of the new strategic assignment—and the Fighter Group justified every hope which had been reposed in it.

EVENTFUL MISSION

Flying as high as 26,000 feet and making speeds in excess of 475 miles per hour at times, the group pilots were loud in praise of Colonel Davis' leadership and in turn won the unstinted commendation of the bomber pilots whom they escorted.

6-17-44

One pilot, Captain Lee Rayford of Washington, D. C., was wounded but successfully flew his ship back to base.

Several others returned after their planes were hit by anti-aircraft flak.

6-17-44

On all of their new missions so far with the 15th Strategic Air Force, flying Thunderbolts, the group fliers have been led by Colonel Davis.

LED BY DAVIS

During their combat mission Friday, escorting 200 or more bombers on the first leg to the Munich area in the heart of industrial Germany, the airmen spotted twenty or more Messerschmitt 109's, and they went into action.

THE HONOR ROLL

Lt. Funderburg was flying as Colonel Davis' wingman on the show.

Others getting air victories were:

6-17-44

1ST LT. MELVIN T. JACKSON, Warrenton, Va., commander of a group squadron which got credit for three of the five planes;

1ST LT. WENDELL O. PRUITT, 4569 Garfield avenue, St. Louis, Mo.,

1ST. LT. CHARLES M. BUSSEY, 1411 West 35th place, Los Angeles, Cal, and

2ND LT. WILLIE W. GREEN, 19 Park boulevard, Stanton, West Va., who shared credit for the fifth plane shot down (1/2 plane each).

3 PROBABLES, 2 DAMAGED

In addition to the five confirmed victories, the group airmen were officially credited with three "probables" and two "damaged"—and often officially listed "probables" actually were destroyed. To get credit for a victory a plane must be seen to disintegrate in the air, crash to earth or in the water, or the pilot must be seen to bail out.

Earlier, while on coastal patrol, members of the group shot up and damaged two German bombers—but were unable to press their advantage because their gasoline was running low.

NEAR BRENNER PASS

Flying top cover at 22,000 to 26,000 feet, the fliers saw the Me-109's coming in to make a pass at the Liberator and Mitchell bombers making up the tactical forces, while about 25 miles northeast of Venice, in the Udine area of northeastern Italy and in the vicinity of the historic Brenner Pass in the Alps.

They were near the end of the initial leg of the flight, which the group's pilots were scheduled to operate on before turning the escort duties over to longer-range P-51 Mustang and P-38 Lightning planes.

34 IN ESCORT

6-17-44

These latter were to provide cover for the bombers over the target industries supporting the German forces and located in southern Germany near Munich.

The escort force consisted of 16 ships from Lt. Jackson's squadron, with two sections of this flight led by Lt. Jackson and Lt. Pruitt, and 18 ships from Captain Rayford's squadron, which got two of the five Nazi planes.

RAYFORD WOUNDED

The sections from Captain Rayford's squadron were led by Colonel Davis, who was also in command of the entire escort mission, and Captain Rayford.

Captain Rayford suffered minor wound from flak, but brought his ship safely back and was able to walk from it.

The flak came up a few seconds before the German fighter planes jumped the Allied formation.

6-17-44

WELCOMED NEW DUTIES

The fliers welcomed their new duties as penetration escorts, after flying Airacobras for the Coastal Air Command on convoy escorts and on coastal patrol since early in February.

They welcomed the combat duty and showed a great determination to do an excellent job, although most of them had only a few hours of transition training in the Thunderbolts before their initial strategic mission, which was a fighter plane sweep in the Po Valley on June 7.

Also uneventful was their second mission, escorting heavy bombers, to Pola harbor at the head of the Adriatic Sea on June 8. This trip was without incident.

ARE COMMENDED

Following two bomber escort missions, so far, the pilots of the heavyweights have called in afterwards to praise the excellence of the Fighter Group's maintenance of formation while providing escort.

6-17-44

A significant result of the strategic missions was the fact that Colonel Davis, flying in combat for the first time with the Group's pilots (he formerly led the older 99th Fighter Squadron brilliantly) won the complete respect and admiration of all his fliers.

Leading all of their missions he is doing —to quote his men —"a damn good job."

DAVIS WINS PLAUDITS

The morale of the group improved 100 per cent with the return of its commander to flying and a relaxation of many of the formal soldiering regulations in force before.

(Colonel Davis, a West Pointer from an Army family, is known to be a strict disciplinarian, fair but firm. Known that Negro fliers would be judged by the results shown by the men he had led and now leads, he has permitted no deviation from correct military procedure and has insisted on a high grade of performance of duty.—Editor)

LESS FORMALITY

The unit he now commands, over three times as large as his former command (the 99th Fighter Squadron), is operating just like any other fighter group. Everyone is high in praise of the spirit shown by Col Davis in actual combat. All attest to his ability as a commander.

On the strategic missions he has been cool, courageous, and eager, those he leads and the bomber pilots he protects all say.

6-17-44

He refuses to tolerate slackers and himself gives superior leadership. He was the first to dive on the Jerries when they attacked the bombers Friday. At this time Col. Davis' and Capt. Rayford's sections were flying at 22,000 and Lt. Jackson's and Lt. Pruitt's sections at 26,000 feet.

Pilots' First Hand Accounts Of Fight

Journal + Guide
Norfolk, Va.

In describing the action, Lt. Bussey said: "Jackson peeled off eight ships in pursuit of 13 of the Jerries, one of whom dove on my tail from above. My wingman, Green, shot at the Jerry and he rolled away. I dove in behind him, pushed my throttle, and caught him. His ship burst into flames. Col. Davis saw him bail out before his plane crashed into the Alps."

Lt. Pruitt said: "After the Jerries were spotted, Lt. (Melvin) Jackson ordered us to release our bellytanks (carrying extra fuel). I looked back over my shoulder and saw four Me-109's making a pass at the bombers. I kept them in view and went into a left driving turn.

"As the Jerries passed under me I rolled over, shoved everything forward, dove, and closed in on one Me-109 at 475 miles per hour.

6-17-44

"I gave him a short burst of machine gun fire, found I was giving too much lead, and waited as he shallowed out of a turn. Then I gave two long two-second bursts and saw his left wing burst into flames. Then the plane disintegrated and went straight into the ground, but the pilot bailed out.

"Someone called in about two others, so I peeled off again and dove after them, but lost them. I started home, as the formation had gone.

"Then I saw a struggling Mitchell bomber trying to get back home. I throttled back and flew cover for this Mitchell for fifty miles until I was certain he was in safe territory, then I came back home on deck."

The plane that Lt. Melvin Jackson shot down tried to use evasive action, but the Virginian stuck to him, giving him short bursts at every turn. Finally the Jerry was forced to hold a turn long enough for the squadron commander to empty his gun at him and see the plane disintegrate in midair.

The fliers praise the Thunderbolt to the skies, saying that it will match anything the enemy has and will best anything of the Germans' in any kind of dogfight.

6-17-44

They have more confidence by far in the Thunderbolt than in their former ship (the Airacobra) and believe that they can rule the skies with the P-47

Ferry Command Captain Plays Active War Role

Philadelphia, Pa.
Tribune

3-25-44

Capt. Peterson, on leave from her station in Los Angeles, California, is visiting the Misses Costello and Gertrude Perrin, of "man's war" was given last week by Capt. Starlett Earline Peterson, of the Women's Army Fer-

Proof that colored women

3-25-44

479

STARLETT EARLINE PETERSON
1738 north 16th street.

A Civil Air Patrol trainee, Capt. Peterson enlisted in the Command a year ago in Omaha, Neb. She attended Officers' Training School in Omaha where she won her wings. After graduating, she received special training in Wyoming in Lincoln, Neb.

The 21-year-old officer is a native of Tahiti, Hawaii. She is an active member of the NAACP and has served on special assignments for that organization locally and throughout the west.

"I want to urge every young man or woman who is interested in aviation to study for advancement," she said. "This is the greatest opportunity ever presented to Negroes, and this is the time to take advantage of it."

3-25-44

She suggests that interested youth should study all available material relative to flight and the power plant of an airplane and especially the C. A. P. offer. She warns that "smoking, drinking and all-night parties will not help to acquire the above average physical requirements demanded by the command."

Capt. Petterson is even now working toward her greatest ambition—to operate a flight and aviation school of her own after the war.

1st Group Of Negro B-25 Pilots Sent To Douglas, Ariz. Field

Age—New York, N.Y.
10-14-44

DOUGLAS ARMY AIR FIELD, Douglas, Arizona — A new chapter was written in the history of this advanced flying school with the expansion of the training program to include B-25 instruction and the arrival of the field's first Negro pilot trainees.

These men, graduates of the flying training course at Tuskegee Army Air Field in Alabama, are now learning to fly the B-25 Mitchell bombers, as are other officer students who heretofore have flown training planes only.

In the group are Second Lieutenants Claude C. Davis, 8357 Bricelyn street, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; Edward T. Dixon, 5 Roosevelt street, Hartford, Connecticut; Harold H. Brown, Weleetka, Oklahoma; and Flight Officers Harris H. Robnett, Jr., 2514 Washington street, Denver, Colorado; Jesse H. Simpson, 1620 "F" street, Fresno, California; Charles J. Quander, Jr., 422 24th street, N.E., Washington, D. C.; Maurice D. Pompey, 1043 Georgiana avenue, South Bend, Indiana; Willard B. Miller, 2100 North Vancouver avenue, Portland, Oregon; James H. Shepherd, 4733 Washington place, N.E., Washington, D.C.; James E. Brothers, 1924 North 9th street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Ramon F. Noches, 219 15th street, Junction City, Kansas; Edward Harris, 12 Conklin street, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; and Reginald A. Bruce, 282 Edgemont avenue, Indianapolis, Indiana.

Second Group Get Wings At Navigators' School

Tribune—Philadelphia, Pa.
9-2-44

HONDO ARMY AIR FIELD, Hondo, Texas—Thirty colored students comprising the largest class in the history of this huge airbase of the AAF Training Command, received silver navigator's wings last week during graduation exercises at the post theater, the War Department announced.

It was the second colored group to complete the strenuous 18-week AAF training program for combat navigators. The first unit, numbered 24 students, won wings and commissions at Hondo Field February 26, 1944.

The members of the latest class began their training at Hondo Field April 10 of this year. The graduates numbered 27 cadets, one warrant officer (junior grade) and two second lieutenants. Upon completion of the course 11 of the cadets were commissioned flight officers; the remaining 16 cadets and the warrant officer were commissioned second lieutenants.

Members of the new class have absorbed hundreds of hours of instruction, both in the air and in ground classrooms, from veteran navigators who themselves experienced months of rugged combat against the enemy during the earlier days of the war.

After 18 weeks of intensive training involving 15,000 miles of practice combat flight in twin-engined training craft, these young men are thoroughly qualified to chart long-distance bombing routes for the AAF's bombers.

By day or by night, in fair or inclement weather, the AAF combat navigator is adept with the tools of navigation. He is trained to arrive over the target with split-second accuracy. The stars, terrain landmarks, radio beams, and "blind flying" instruments are the all-purpose "skeleton keys" with which he unlocks the doors to Axis nerve centers.

4-2-44

Following are the names and home addresses of Pennsylvania graduates:

Flight Officer Walter L. Robinson, 19, 412 Huyett street, Reading, Pa.

Second Lieutenant James R. Williams, 20, 244 Highland, Wayne, Pa.

Journal & Guide—Norfolk
11-18-44

Ready For Combat
Tribune—Philadelphia, Pa.

15TH AAF IN ITALY—Attentiveness and sincerity is displayed in this photo of a group of Negro Airmen as they receive their final instructions before starting on their 100th combat mission flow against the enemy. First Lieut. George D. Gray, 24, of 886 McDowell street, Welch, West Va., and First Lieut. Spurgeon N. Ellington, 25, of Winston-Salem, N. C., are shown in front row.—(Air Corps Photo)

Recent graduates at the Tuskegee Army Air Field, Tuskegee, Ala., reading left to right, are: Second Lieut. JAS. W. HARVEY, who was awarded his wings and commission from the Aviation Cadet Corps. He is a graduate of Mountain Top, (Pa.) High School where he was active in extra-curricula activities, participating in basketball. He is the son of Mr. James Harvey of Mountain Top.

Second Lieut. JOSEPH E. JENKINS, who was commissioned from the Infantry Officers' Candidate School, Fort Benning, Ga., on June 12, 1943, was awarded his wings. The future bomber pilot is a former student of Radnor High School, Ardmore, Pa., where he was captain of the track team. He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Earlie Jenkins of 814 Aubrey avenue, Ardmore, Pa.

Flight Officer JAMES L. GREEN was commissioned from the Aviation Cadet Corps. The twin-engine pilot, a former student of Benjamin Franklin High School, Philadelphia, lived at 1439 Kater street, here.

Second Lieut. HENRY A. HUNTER, who was commissioned from the Infantry Officers' Candidate School, Ft. Ry A. Hunter of 834 First avenue, Williamsport, Pa., entered the Army on February 12, 1942. He received his basic training at Camp Croft, South Carolina. —Official U. S. AAF Photos by AAF Training Command.)

11-4-44

3-25-44

STARLETT EARLINE PETERSON

1738 north 16th street.

A Civil Air Patrol trainee, Capt. Peterson enlisted in the Command a year ago in Omaha, Neb. She attended Officers' Training School in Omaha where she won her wings. After graduating, she received special training in Wyoming in Lincoln, Neb.

The 21-year-old officer is a native of Tahiti, Hawaii. She is an active member of the NAACP and has served on special assignments for that organization locally and throughout the west.

"I want to urge every young man or woman who is interested in aviation to study for advancement," she said. "This is the greatest opportunity ever presented to Negroes, and this is the time to take advantage of it."

3-25-44

She suggests that interested youth should study all available material relative to flight and the power plant of an airplane and especially the C. A. P. offer. She warns that "smoking, drinking and all-night parties will not help to acquire the above average physical requirements demanded by the command."

Capt. Petterson is even now working toward her greatest ambition—to operate a flight and aviation school of her own after the war.

1st Group Of Negro B-25 Pilots Sent To Douglas, Ariz. Field

Age—New York, N.Y.

10-14-44

DOUGLAS ARMY AIR FIELD, Douglas, Arizona — A new chapter was written in the history of this advanced flying school with the expansion of the training program to include B-25 instruction and the arrival of the field's first Negro pilot trainees.

These men, graduates of the flying training course at Tuskegee Army Air Field in Alabama, are now learning to fly the B-25 Mitchell bombers, as are other officer students who heretofore have flown training planes only.

In the group are Second Lieutenants Claude C. Davis, 8357 Brycelyn street, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; Edward T. Dixon, 5 Roosevelt street, Hartford, Connecticut; Harold H. Brown, Weleetka, Oklahoma; and Flight Officers Harris H. Robnett, Jr., 2514 Washington street, Denver, Colorado; Jesse H. Simpson, 1620 "F" street, Fresno, California; Charles J. Quander, Jr., 422 24th street, N.E., Washington, D. C.; Maurice D. Pompey, 1043 Georgiana avenue, South Bend, Indiana; Willard B. Miller, 2100 North Vancouver avenue, Portland, Oregon; James H. Shepherd, 4733 Washington place, N.E., Washington, D.C.; James E. Brothers, 1924 North 9th street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Ramon F. Noches, 219 15th street, Junction City, Kansas; Edward Harris, 12 Conklin street, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; and Reginald A. Bruce, 282 Edgemont avenue, Indianapolis, Indiana.

10-14-44

Recent graduates at the Tuskegee Army Air Field, Tuskegee, Ala., reading left to right, are: Second Lieut. JAS. W. HARVEY, who was awarded his wings and commission from the Aviation Cadet Corps. He is a graduate of Mountain Top, (Pa.) High School where he was active in extra-curricula activities, participating in basketball. He is the son of Mr. James Harvey of Mountain Top.

Second Lieut. JOSEPH E. JENKINS, who was commissioned from the Infantry Officers' Candidate School, Fort Benning, Ga., on June 12, 1943, was awarded his wings. The future bomber pilot is a former student of Radnor High School, Ardmore, Pa., where he was captain of the track team. He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Earlie Jenkins of 814 Aubrey avenue, Ardmore, Pa.

Flight Officer JAMES L. GREEN was commissioned from the Aviation Cadet Corps. The twin-engine pilot, a former student of Benjamin Franklin High School, Philadelphia, lived at 1439 Kater street, here.

Second Lieut. HENRY A. HUNTER, who was commissioned from the Infantry Officers' Candidate School, Ft. Benning, Ga., on March 17, street, Williamsport, Pa., entered the Army on February 12, 1942. He received his wings and commission from the Aviation Cadet Corps. The twin-engine pilot, a former student of Benjamin Franklin High School, Philadelphia, lived at 1439 Kater street, here.

11-4-44

Second Group Get Wings At Navigators' School

Tribune—Philadelphia, Pa.

9-2-44

HONDO ARMY AIR FIELD, Hondo, Texas—Thirty colored students comprising the largest class in the history of this huge airbase of the AAF Training Command, received silver navigator's wings last week during graduation exercises at the post theater, the War Department announced.

It was the second colored group to complete the strenuous 18-week AAF training program for combat navigators. The first unit, numbered 24 students, won wings and commissions at Hondo Field February 26, 1944.

The members of the latest class began their training at Hondo Field April 10 of this year. The graduates numbered 27 cadets, one warrant officer (junior grade) and two second lieutenants. Upon completion of the course 11 of the cadets were commissioned flight officers; the remaining 16 cadets and the warrant officer were commissioned second lieutenants.

Members of the new class have absorbed hundreds of hours of instruction, both in the air and in ground classrooms, from veteran navigators who themselves experienced months of rugged combat against the enemy during the earlier days of the war.

After 18 weeks of intensive training involving 15,000 miles of practice combat flight in twin-engined training craft, these young men are thoroughly qualified to chart long-distance bombing routes for the AAF's bombers.

Journal & Guide—Norfolk, Va.

11-18-44

Ready For Combat

Tribune—Philadelphia, Pa.

15TH AAF IN ITALY—Attentiveness and sincerity is displayed in this photo of a group of Negro Airmen as they receive their final instructions before starting on their 100th combat mission flow against the enemy. First Lieut. George D. Gray, 24, of 886 McDowell street, Welch, West Va., and First Lieut. Spurgeon N. Ellington, 25, of Winston-Salem, N. C., are shown in front row.—(Air Corps Photo)

4-2-44

By day or by night, in fair or inclement weather, the AAF combat navigator is adept with the tools of navigation. He is trained to arrive over the target with split-second accuracy. The stars, terrain landmarks, radio beams, and "blind flying" instruments are the all-purpose "skeleton keys" with which he unlocks the doors to Axis nerve centers.

Following are the names and home addresses of Pennsylvania graduates:

Flight Officer Walter L. Robinson, 19, 412 Huyett street, Reading, Pa.

Second Lieutenant James R. Williams, 20, 244 Highland, Wayne, Pa.

47a-1944

Knock Out 22 Ships In One Attack

Journal + Guide
Norfolk, Va.

Lts. Thomas, McGee, Briggs, Weathers, Hill Get Victories

9-2-44

By JOHN "ROVER" JORDAN
Guide War Correspondent
(Copyright. Reproduction forbidden)

AN ADVANCED ALLIED AIR BASE IN ITALY—Via Wireless—When the Jerries refused to come up and fight the Negro fighter pilots of the Mustang group under command of Col. B. O. Davis, in Italy, these lads went down to get them. Swooping down on two enemy airfields on a return trip from a bombing mission, August 27, the fliers destroyed 22 Jerry planes on the ground by strafing and damaged others. Previously, in air battles on August 23 and 24, they had knocked down four enemy fighters which gives the group 26 confirmed victories in the past few days and pushes the group total close to 90 planes.

After escorting a flight of heavy bombers to a target in Blechhammer, Germany, Sunday, the Mustang pilots sighted airfields at Kosteleo and Prostejou. They peeled off and strafed the installations at these fields destroying the 22 planes before they could take off. It was considered one of the most successful missions the group has ever had.

9-2-44

GET VICTORIES

The four victories gained in the air battles August 23rd and 24th were credited to the following pilots: 2nd Lt. John F. Briggs, 3651 Finney avenue, St. Louis, Mo.; 2nd Lt. William H. Thomas, Los Angeles, Calif.; and 2nd Lt. Charles E. McGee, 607 N. Hickory street, Champaign, Ill., who got one each.

9-2-44

And 1st Lt. Luke Weathers, Jr., 601 South Lauderdale street, Memphis, Tenn. and Flight Officer William Hill, of Huntington, W. Va., who shared in destroying the fourth Jerry in a battle on August 23.

Group pilots, determined to get their bombers through to the target despite "hell and high water" are trying to knock down all German fighters which get in the way. The first three of these latest victories were chalked up while flying top cover for bombers on their way to hit targets in central Europe.

SEE PLANE CRASH

The fourth victory was shared by the two fliers when seven ME 190's jumped the formation from behind while the Mustangs were escorting heavies to hit airdromes in Austria. Anti-aircraft fire from German ground installations added to the problem the fighters had to solve on this mission. Weathers and Hill saw the plane they shot down crash in flames against a hillside.

9-2-44

A formation of Group fliers was cheated out of more victories when German interceptors fled from them when they carried bombers to blast the synthetic oil works at Oswiecim. The Mustangs were flying high altitude cover, led by 1st Lt. Edward C. Gleed, of Lawrence, Kan., group operations officer, and were set for a torrid battle. They discovered the Jerry formation trying to sneak up on the bombers from behind. The Group fliers turned and started for the interceptors but the Germans fled before the Mustangs could get in position to fire.

On August 28, the fliers escorted bombers to the Miskolc railyards in Germany. No enemy aircraft were sighted.

DAVIS CITED

The second oak leaf cluster, to be added to his air medal, was awarded, last week, to Col. Davis, the Group's commanding officer. Several other pilots were awarded air medals and oak leaf clusters.

RESPONSIBLE FOR SAVING MANY LIVES

9-2-44

The true significance of the Mustang's contribution to the recent invasion of Southern France has just been realized here. It will be remembered that the Mustang pilots were assigned, just before the invasion, to strafe the radar stations used by the Germans in detecting approaching air or surface ships in that crucial area.

The success of the Group fliers in destroying these installations so completely on the eve of D-Day is credited by competent observers as one of the principal factors in the light losses incurred when the airborne and seaborne invasion actually began. It is figured that this operation saved thousands of Allied lives since the Germans were unable to know that the invading armies were approaching.

Officials of the allied high command stressed the grim necessity for success in this operation when they briefed the fliers for this operation.

9-2-44

INVASION DEPENDED ON THEM

The success or failure of the invasion could have depended on their competence, it was pointed out and the excellent results achieved by the fliers in this important operation is considered one of the major contributions to allied victory in the European theatre.

In a mission escorting bombers to the Ploestio oil fields of Roumania on August 17, the formation leader, 1st Lt. John Daniels, of 15214 Vine street, Harvey Ill., a Hampton graduate, reported that no enemy aircraft were sighted but that flak was heavy. Lt. Daniels, one of the February replacements for the 99th Fighter Squadron, has risen rapidly since coming overseas and is considered an exceptionally able pilot. He was soon assigned to the job of assistant flight leader in the 99th and is now leading fighter escort formations.

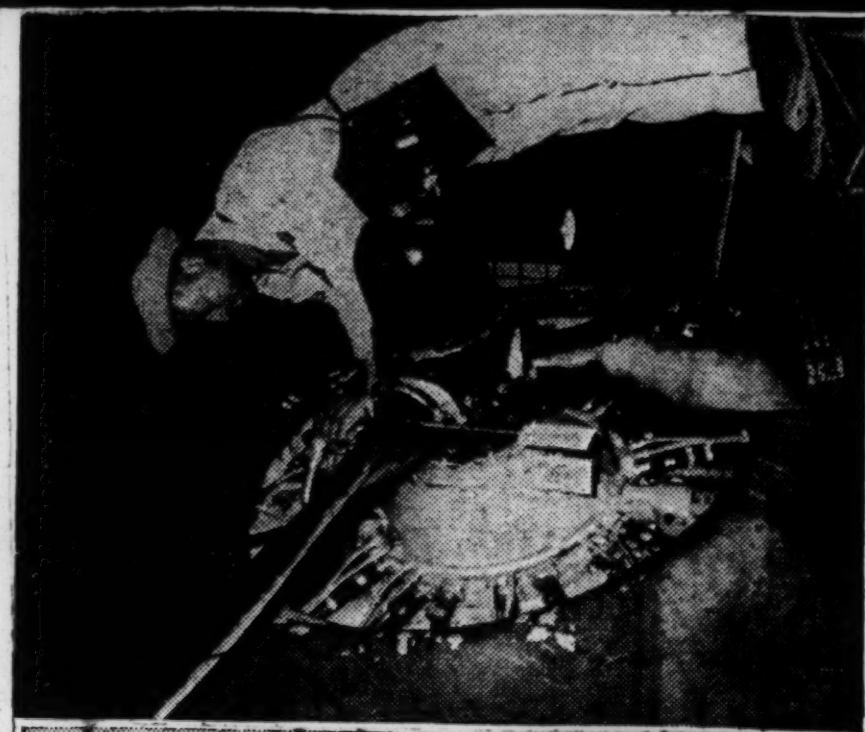
9-2-44

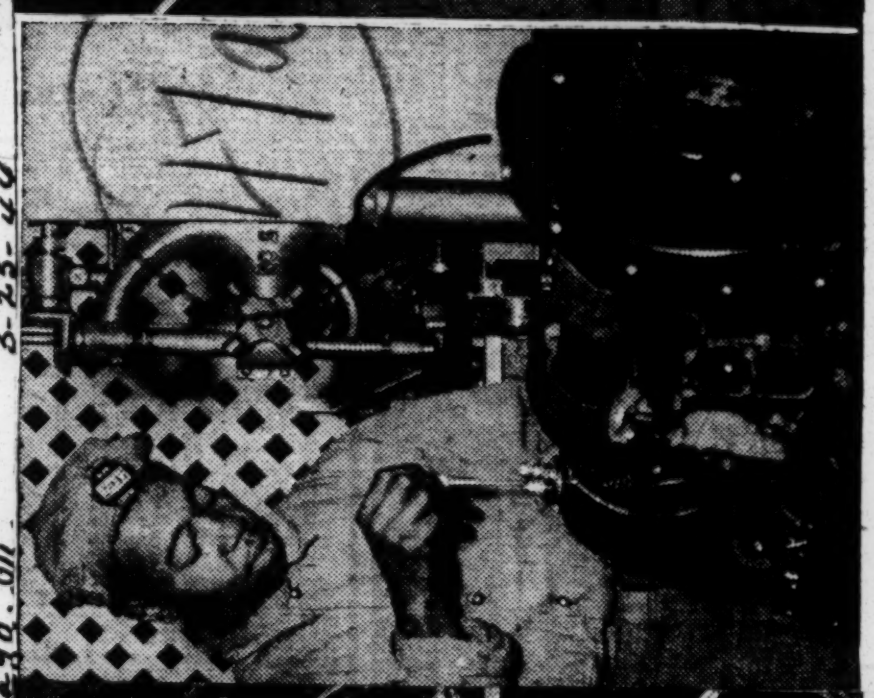
PROTECT BOMBER

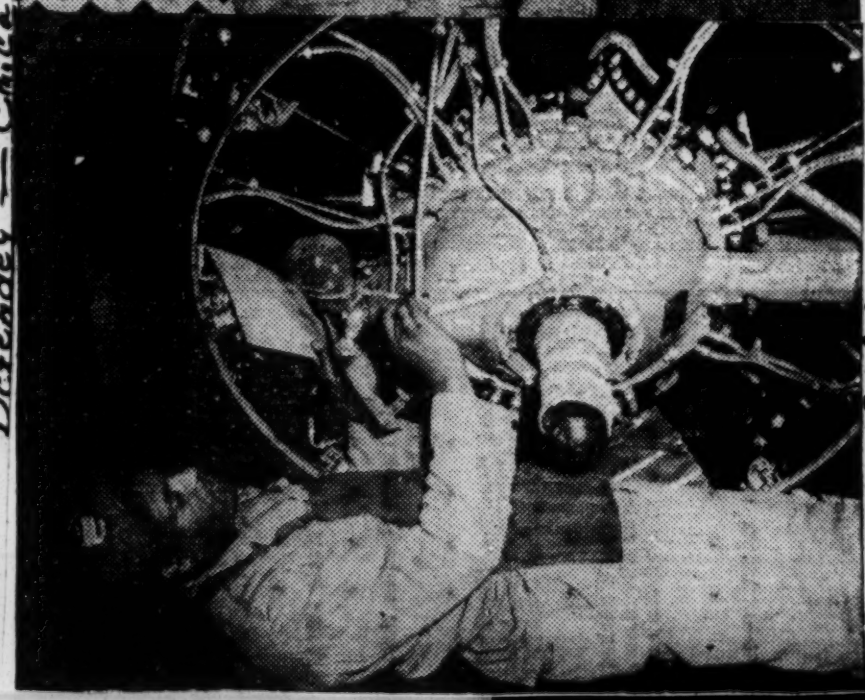
On this mission, Flight Officer Edward J. Williams, of 1506 27th street, Columbus, Ga., the first Negro flight officer to see combat, and Flight Officer William I. Hill, 912 27th street Huntington, W. Va., left the formation to escort a flak-riddled heavy bomber safely back to its base.

PERFORM SKILLED DUTIES AS AIRCRAFT MECHANICS

Defender — Chicago, Ill.
3-25-44







3-25-44

The Aviation Detachment of the 366th Base Headquarters and Air Base Squadron of the Smoky Hill Army Air Field for the past 18 months. Pictured are at left: Pvt. Charles F. James of Jacksonville, Fla., at Army Air Field, Salina, Kans., has set the pace for work on an airplane motor. Private James is a graduate of Florida Agricultural and Mechanical college. A mail clerk for a tobacco company in civilian life, Army units everywhere when it comes to aircraft studied at Xavier university, New Orleans. Center: Pvt. Leroy Peters, Philadelphia, is mechanics. War Bond buying, and unit administra- in the army, specializing in propellers and generators. Tallahassee, and studi- tion. Formerly the 46th Aviation Squadron, the unit Orleans. Center: Pvt. Leroy Peters, Philadelphia, is rendered invaluable service at the Smoky Hill an aircraft electrician. He gained his skill in elec- —Photos by U. S. Army Signal Corps.

Bomber Pilot Trainees Finish Course at Tuskegee

Afro American — Baltimore, Md.

8-12-44

Future bomber pilots who received their wings and commissions at the Tuskegee Army Air Field last week. They are, left to right: First row, Flight Officers Reginald A. Bruce, Indianapolis, Ind.; James W. Brothers, 1924 N. Nineteenth Street, Philadelphia; Edward Harris, Pittsburgh, Pa.; Harris H. Robnett, Denver; Charles J. Quander, Jr., 422 Twenty-fourth Street, Northeast, Washington; second row, Flight Officers Jesse H. Simpson, Fresno, Calif.; Willard B. Miller, Portland, Oregon; James H. Shepherd, 4733 Washington Place,Northeast, Washington; Maurice D. Pompey, South Bend, Ind.; 2nd Lt. Edward T. Dixon, Hartford, Conn.; 2nd Lt. Harold H. Brown, Weeleetaka, Okla.; F/O Ramon F. Noches, Junction City, Kans.; 2nd Lt. John W. Mosley, Denver, and 1st Lt. Claude C. Davis, Pittsburgh, Pa.

23 More Fighter Pilots Commissioned at TAAF

Afro American — Baltimore, md.

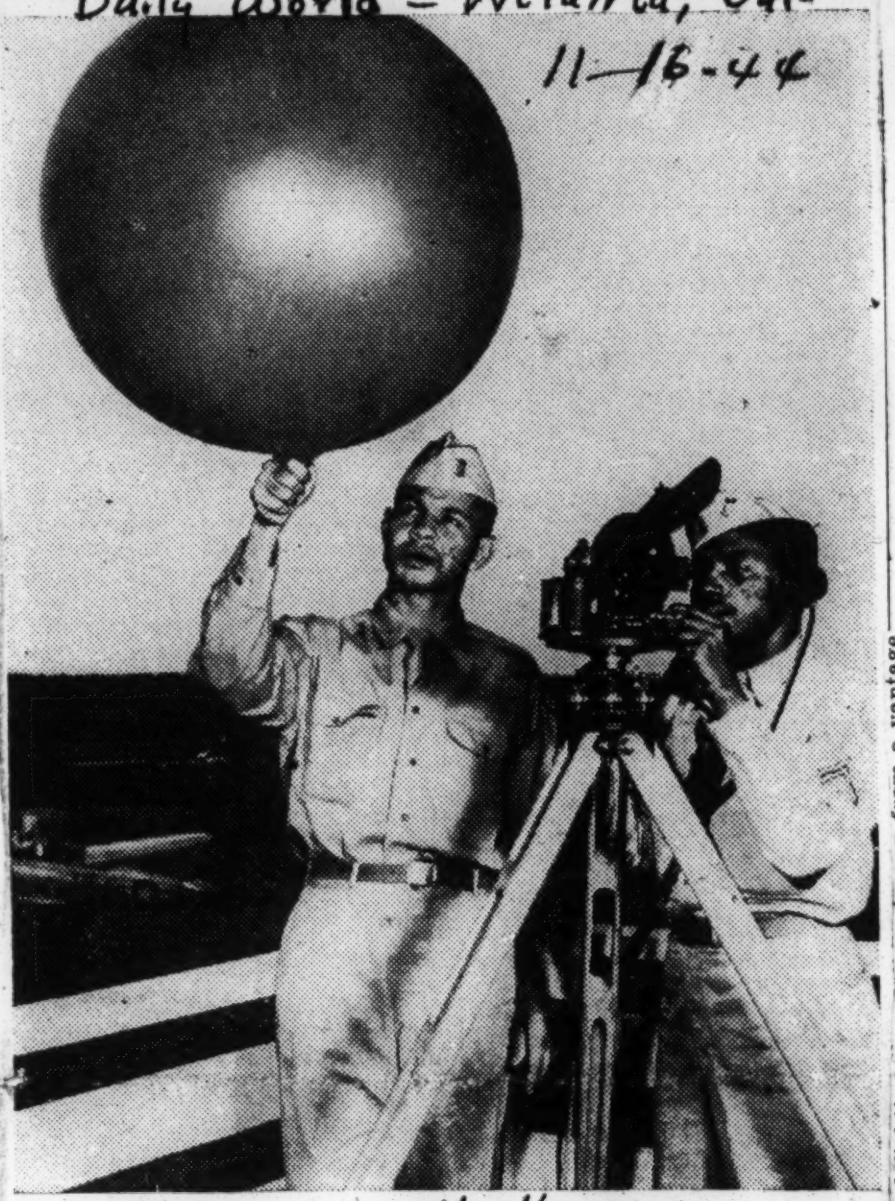
8-12-44

These twenty-three fighter pilots make up the latest class to be commissioned at the Tuskegee Army Air Field. They are, left to right: First row, Flight Officers William E. Rice, Swarthmore, Pa.; James H. Fischer, Stoughton, Mass.; William H. Edwards, Birmingham; 2nd Lt. Thomas C. Street, Springfield, N.J.; and F/O Calvin J. Spann, Rutherford, N.J.; second row, 2nd Lt. Paul L. Green, Xenia, Ohio; 2nd. Lt. Conrad A. Johnson, 460 W. 147th Street, N.Y.C.; F/O Joseph C. White, Chattanooga, Tenn.; F/O Robert E. Williams, Jr., Chicago; 2nd Lt. Leo R. Gray, Roxbury, Mass.; F/O Maury M. Reid, Jr., 1873 Amsterdam Avenue, N.Y.C., and 2nd Lt. Benny R. Kimbrough, Cincinnati; third row, 2nd Lt. Harold L. White, Detroit; 2nd Lt. Robert E. Garrison, Jr., Columbus, Ohio; F/O John H. Lyle, Chicago; F/O Leland H. Pennington, Rochester, N.Y.; 2nd Lt. Ronald W. Reeves, 2934 Egevele Terrace, Northwest, Washington; F/O Elbert N. Merriwether, Jr., Brooklyn, N.Y.; F/O Newman C. Golden, Cincinnati; 2nd Lt. George L. Bing, Brooklyn, N.Y.; F/O Thurston L. Gaines, Freeport, N.Y., and 2nd Lt. John E. Edwards, Steubenville, Ohio.

Just Before The Takeoff

Daily World — Atlanta, Ga.

11-16-44



11-16-44

Big, white, hydrogen-inflated balloons are sent aloft by AAF Weather Service Observers at regular intervals thruout the day to collect vitol data on wind direction and velocity at upper air levels for use in preparing weather forecasts for Army pilots. In the picture above, Technical Sergeant Rudolph Jeter of 2530 Carpenter Street, Philadelphia, is all set to release the balloon while Corporal Edward W. Primus of 536 Madison Street, Brooklyn, adjusts the sights of the theodolite thru which he will follow its flight. Both men are weather observers for the weather detachment at the Tuskegee Army Air Field, Tuskegee, Alabama — the only all-Negro weather detachment in the entire AAF Weather Service. (Photo by Army Air Forces.)

12-13-44

Eyewitness Story!

HOW 92nd TOOK HILL

Pgh. Courier, Pa.

By HASKELL COHEN
(Courier War Correspondent)

WITH THE FIFTH ARMY IN ITALY—Last week's dispatch carried the story of the attack on Hill X by a new unit recently attached to the 92nd division. Here is an eye-witness account by Lt. Paul Willey, New Haven, Conn., a member of the other unit that accompanied the attacking forces.

"Just before dawn last Tuesday, Captain Danby marshaled his forces together. Company B moved right up the hill without opposition. They passed most of the Jerry defenses. Three platoons got

to the top of the hill and Danby closed in for hand-fighting what was going on from the top of the hill.
was bringing up the rest when After they had killed nine Ger- point near the top of the
Jerry opened fire. Evidently the mans, the rest of the Nazis sur- 9 o'clock, Cap-
Germans let us get through their rendered. Our boys took an even tain Danby started the
lines intentionally. The enemy fire tain Danby was sonally leading his men, b
dispersed two platoons. attack straight up the
HAND-TO-HAND FIGHT "All this time Captain Danby hill, but Jerry's
"The platoon on the right did an co-ordinating forces for the coun- position was too well defen
excellent job once the boys were ter-attack, but unfortunately did men suffered four casu
brought together again in a rifle not have enough men. He worked no deaths. We managed
platoon. This gang moved in and miracles with the forces at hand, out several machine pist
I was directing artillery fire at retiring down the slope.
the time and could see exactly

4/.. 1944

INSIDE TUSKEGEE

COLONEL HAZARD LEAVES TAAF, BUT WHITE RULING CLIQUE AGAIN BY-PASSES NEGRO OFFICERS

By JACK DAY, Special Correspondent

Courier — Pittsburgh, Pa.

(Fifth in a Series)

THERE was rejoicing at Tuskegee Army Air Field last week. The rejoicing began when it was learned that Lt. Col. John T. Hazard, executive officer of TAAF, had been transferred. Colonel Hazard had been one of the central figures in a bitter controversy concerning the appointment of white officers to key positions on this supposedly all-Negro field.

Colonel Hazard came to this field over two years ago as a captain and during his stay here was promoted to lieutenant colonel. While some pointed him out as a rabid Negro hater, others insisted that he was only the "whip" and shield for the commanding officer of the field.

10-14-44

ONLY WHITE OFFICERS FILL VACANCIES

Although Negroes here found an opportunity for rejoicing when Colonel Hazard was reported transferred, their hopes were short-lived when they read the list of new appointments. In the face of strong demands for Negro officers in key positions, only white officers were appointed to fill vacancies.

The appointments went this way. Major John G. Cooke, white, was appointed deputy for administration and service (executive officer). It will be remembered that this same officer was first switched from the administrative job of captain of cadets and made deputy for supply and maintenance, a purely technical job. Now, in taking Colonel Hazard's vacated post, he is being switched back to an administrative position.

10-14-44

Negroes here say that this is clinching evidence of the existence of a clique at the field, for this time Major Mitchell Haifter, white, who outranks Major Cooke, was given the by-pass. As post air inspector, he should have been an automatic appointee to Colonel Hazard's post. They point out that Major Haifter came here in his present rank and probably has been kept outside the clique.

SECOND BY-PASS FOR NEGRO CAPTAIN

Meanwhile, Major William G. Williams, white, took Major Cooke's vacated job of deputy for supply and maintenance, and Capt. Lee L. Peterson, white, base engineer officer, filled Major Williams' post of assistant deputy for supply and maintenance. This move meant the second by-pass for Capt. Cassius Harris (colored)—first by (then captain) Major Cooke and now by Captain Peterson. Captain Friend was appointed base engineering officer, thus making it a clean sweep for "white supremacy."

10-14-44

Feelings of Negro Army personnel on this field are higher than ever because of these appointments. It is rumored that they are readying a petition to the War Department for a thorough investigation of the administrative activities of the field.

COLONEL PARISH CALLS MEETING OF OFFICERS

Since The Courier began publishing this series of articles, Col. Noel F. Parish, commanding officer of the field, has called a meeting of all officers stationed at TAAF. It was understood that he said:

1. **His appointments were made on qualification alone.**

2. **The only other solution was to move the base to a field in the North.**

10-14-44

There is a rumor afloat that a secret agreement exists whereby this field can only remain in the South so long as white officers run the post. It is a matter of record that whites of this community protested violently when the War Department announced that TAAF would be located here. They continued through the reign of Colonel Weaver (now a general), the first commanding officer of the field who demanded and received respect for Negro soldiers. Local pressure, according to reports, caused his transfer. All of a sudden Colonel Kimble (now a general) came in as commanding officer and equally sudden the protests died down and vanished.

TUSKEGEE FLYERS RECEIVE WINGS, PILOT RATINGS

Courier — Pittsburgh, Pa. 3-25-44

With Col. Noel F. Parrish, post commander of the Tuskegee Army Air Field, predicting that future classes of pilots at the AAF Training Command installation for pilots would be larger under the Air Force's expansion program, the latest contingent of flyers received their wings and pilot ratings in the Post chapel Monday, March 13.

3-25-44

Shown from left to right, first row: 2nd Lts. William S. Price, Topeka, Kans.; Elbert Hudson, Los Angeles, Calif.; William Wheeler, Detroit, Mich.; Henry E. Rohlsen, Christiansted, St. Croix, Virgin Islands; Vincent Dean, Corona, N. Y.; Flight Officer Charles E. Wilson, Chicago, Ill.; 2nd Lts. Reginald W. Hayes, Holicong, Pa., and Elton Nightingale, of Tuskegee Institute, Ala.

Second row: 2nd Lts. Fred Brewer, Jr., Charlotte, N. C.; Albert Young, Memphis, Tenn.; Rooseveit Stiger, Jackson, Mich.; Charles T. Williams, Los Angeles, Calif.; Herbert H. Heywood, Christiansted, St. Croix, Virgin Islands; John Porter, Cleveland, Ohio; Andrew Marshall, Wadesboro, N. C.; Charles L. White, St. Louis, Mo., and Peter H. Whittaker of Detroit, Mich.

3-25-44

Third row: 1st Lt. Payton H. Lyle, Chicago, Ill.; 2nd Lts. Walter R. Brown, Jr., Hampton Institute, Va.; Roscoe C. Brown, Jr., New York City; Ahmed A. Rayner, Jr., Chicago, Ill.; Joseph L. Merton, Jr., Chicago, Ill.; Rixie McCarroll, Gary, Ind.; James L. Hall, Jr., Washington, D. C.; Gordon M. Rapier, Gary, Ind.; James A. Calhoun, Bridgeport, Conn., and Charles E. Darnell, of Dayton, Ohio.—Photo by AAF Training Command.

NOT QUALIFIED FOR THE DUTIES

Savannah Morning News

NEGROES IN THE SERVICE

Anniston Man's Son Killed In a Collision

Savannah, Ga.

ANNISTON, Ala., Dec. 16 (AP).—An Anniston business executive whose son was killed in an air collision involving an army pursuit plane piloted by a negro today protested the "sudden elevation" of negroes to duties they are not "yet qualified to perform."

His statements were made in a letter to the Anniston Star and the War Department.

12-17-44

Earl C. Knowlton, head of the Anniston water works, said his only son, Lt. Earl C. Knowlton, Jr., pilot of a B-24, and eleven others were killed, in addition to the negro pilot of the pursuit plane, in the recent accident near Charleston, S. C.

"I knew that my boy might have to give his life for his country," Knowlton wrote, "but I expected it to accomplish some useful purpose, and not to be sacrificed to the fanatical idea that all men must be allowed to perform on the same level regardless of background qualification.

12-17-44

"My father's people fought for the North; my mother's for the South in the War Between the States.

"I hold no blame against the negro who flew a fighter plane into a bomber, killing my boy and eleven others. He flew that plane because he was ordered to do so," Knowlton wrote.

"But, with all my heart, I resent our government's apparent determination to raise the negro overnight, as it were, to places in civilization which he is as yet unprepared to assume.

"With rare exceptions, his mind is not prepared to make the split-second decisions which mean life or death in the operation of so swift and so complicated and so deadly a mechanism as an airplane. . . .

"Negroes were among the first to come to my home to offer sympathy in my boy's death. They attended the funeral service. They loved him. He loved them. So, this is not a letter of hate.

Savannah Morning News 12-17-44

"It is the expression of the very deep resentment I feel toward the fetishism of our government in its attitude towards an unnatural and impossibly sudden elevation of the negro to duties he is not yet qualified to perform.

11-17-44

"Some will say that the accident might have happened if a white man had been piloting the fighter plane. That is true. But the percentage against it would have been in my boy's favor."

In New York, Roy Wilkins, acting secretary of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, said in a statement:

"We can understand the grief and disappointment of a father who expected that if his son should lose his life in serving his country, it would not be in an accident, but in combat against our enemies.

"But the record of negro combat pilots to date in actual combat with German planes in the Mediterranean theater of war, over the Anzio beachhead, at Salerno, with the British Eighth Army up the Italian peninsula, and in escort work for our big bombers over southeastern Europe and southern France during the German occupation, would seem to prove that negroes are capable of handling a combat airplane and making split-second decisions at more than 400 miles an hour.

11-17-44

"Mr. Knowlton says his letter is not one of hatred and we believe him so far as his feeling for this one negro pilot is concerned; but his main thesis, which is that the negro is still a kind of uncivilized, lower animal incapable of adjusting himself to civilization is an underhand cut at the whole negro race.

"From the very beginning in 1940, negro-Americans have spent most of their energies struggling to get a chance to fight the enemies of our country, and this incident is just one more of the many that have been used to discourage him and to relegate him to strictly menial and service work in uniform."

In Washington, a War Department spokesman declined comment. He said, however, that if the letter came to the War Department it would "of course, be answered." The spokesman said he did not know whether the letter had been received.

Tuskegee Pilot Killed

People's Voice — New York, N.Y.

TUSKEGEE ARMY AIR FIELD, Ala.—Second Lt. George Kenneth Hayes of Los Angeles, was killed while making a routine cross country combat training mission near Birmingham, June 12, according to the public relations office here.

6-24-44

Lt. Hayes, a former student of the University of California, has a brother in the army air forces, serving as a fighter pilot at the Walterboro Army Air Field, in South Carolina.

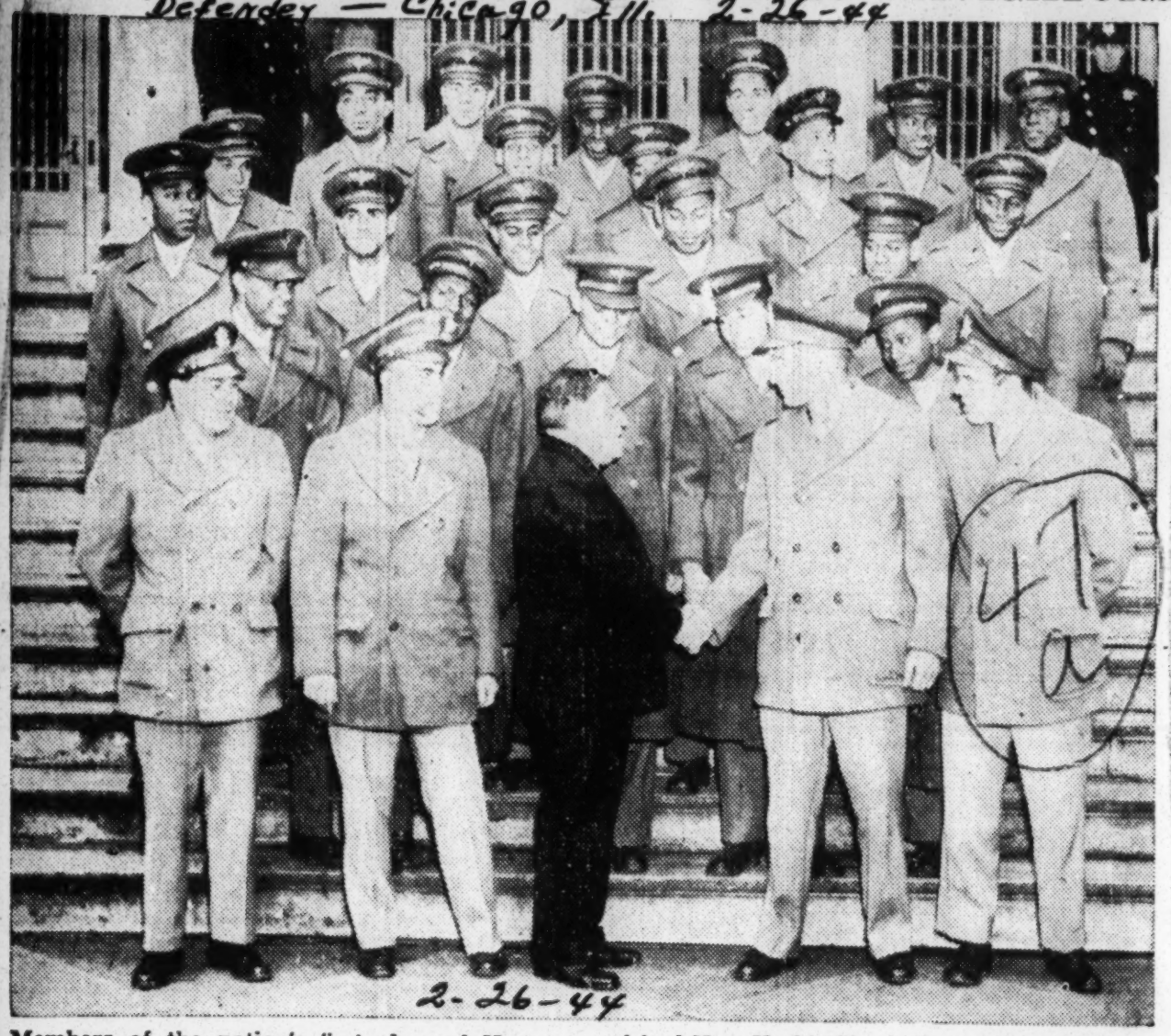
He is the son of the Rev. and Mrs. George L. Hayes of Los Angeles, and was a member of the Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity.

The young pilot was flying a single-engine fighter craft at the time of the mishap. A board of qualified army air force officers has been appointed to investigate and determine the exact cause of the accident.

His enlistment in the service, which was by appointment as an aviation cadet, he was employed in the terminal annex in Los Angeles.

LA GUARDIA HONORS FIRST NEGRO NAVIGATORS

Defender — Chicago, Ill. 2-26-44



Members of the nation's first class of Negro navigation cadets, who will receive their commissions in the Army Air Forces on February 26, visited New York's City hall as guests of Mayor Fiorello H. LaGuardia. They are shown on the steps of City hall as the Mayor greeted their commanding officer, Major Galen B. Price.

Across The Desk

By LUDLOW W. WERNER

The New York Age

2-19-44

(Continued from last week)

TAAF — Just a week before I reached the Tuskegee Army Air Field, I received a phone call in New York telling me about the post restaurant which heretofore had a policy of serving whites on one side and Negroes on another. The kitchen made a natural dividing line and the whites went only into the right side and Negroes only into the left.

This had long been source of deep resentment by Negroes at the field, but it remained for Colonel Noel F. Parrish, commanding officer of the TAAF to tell his subordinates that General Ulio's order prohibiting discrimination was undebatable and must be followed out explicitly.

When I arrived at TAAF, there was a noticeable absence of whites from the restaurant. Instead of eating at the field, they just either ate in the

town of Tuskegee or else if they were civilian employes brought their lunches or food to the field with them.

Word of the action was not long in reaching the town of Tuskegee and there were plenty of "crackers" who were burned up about the situation. There was nothing they could do about separating the races, however, because the Field is government property and the Army is the Army. There was some talk, though, that several of the companies supplying soft drinks, etc., to the Field would discontinue serving the Field. There is little likelihood, however, that this would happen, because money is still money and the companies not only would lose god money — and plenty of it — but also would be guilty of breaking contracts entered into with the government and therefore would be heavily penalized.

I talked with Colonel Parrish about the situation and he was perfectly frank in his answers. For the better part of an hour we talked about situations on the field and I must say that he is an exceptionally clever man. A Southerner, Col. Parrish has made a study of the Negro, and apparently has made a very thorough study at that. He doesn't mind talking about race relations and has very definite ideas about it.

From what the Colonel said, he has no desire to be known or classified as a "friend of the Negro". He feels that were he to become known as a "friend of the Negro", he would be less effective not only as a commanding officer but also as a gentleman confronted with many problems in the town of Tuskegee proper.

A good picture of the Colonel's philosophy may be gathered from the following excerpts of remarks he made March 13, 1944 to a graduating class of cadets:

"We try ot respect the beliefs and customs and habits of people everywhere, even in conquered territory, when these do not interfere directly with our military activities. Sometimes these beliefs and customs appear to be just petty prejudices, but not to the people who hold them. So in whatever part of this or any country we find ourselves, we must try to disrupt and arouse purely local situations as little as possible. While we are certainly not officers in a Confederate Army, neither are we officers in a hostile army of occupation. And the problem goes deeper than any superficial geographical distinctions. Within our own military units, the important divisions of opinion are not simply North or South, not by any means. The only important divisions of opinion are between those who will work conscientiously and constructively toward a common goal and those who try to make personal or political capital out of a nation-wide situation which is somewhat embarrassing to all of us.

"The greatest problems arise from those necessary decisions and policies on the sometimes indistinct borderline between purely official and purely personal affairs, or purely military and purely social events, or military and civil control. In order to maintain harmony and general good feeling within our stations and out, we must sometimes make compromises where conflicting principles are involved, compromises which United States. As commanding officer he will probably make satisfy nobody but at least avoid hopeless conflict and con- a reputation which should carry him far. It would not sur- fusion and usually prevent bickering and interference which prise me in the least to see him advanced in rank to brigadier would make it impossible for us to perform our mission." general. That probably will not come, however, until after

The whole speech, thirty typewritten pages long, gives a the first of the year when it is expected that Negro pilots, pretty good picture of Colonel Parrish. I believe he is a deep, this country or returning from the war zone, will take thinker and is sincere in his beliefs. There is no doubt that over as instructors at TAAF itself.

be commands the most unique military establishment in the

47a-1944

GENERAL PINS MEDAL ON SON IN ITALY; LED 332nd DURING ATTACK

Courier — Pittsburgh, Pa.
9-16-44

ROME, Italy—Brigadier - General Benjamin O. Davis proudly pinned the Distinguished Flying Cross on the breast of his son, Colonel Benjamin O. Davis, in view of members of the famous 332nd Fighter Group here Monday, in a father-and-son ceremony unusual in Army history. The group is part of the 15th Air Force.

Also receiving the DFC were three other members of the Fighter Group who had distinguished themselves in action. They were:

CAPT. JOSEPH D. ELLSBERRY, 24, Langston, Okla., who shot down three ME 109s during a single engagement.

LT. JACK D. HOLSCLAW, 26, Spokane, Wash., who participated in the strafing of enemy supply lines during the height of the Italian offensive. He also shot down two enemy planes.

LT. CLARENCE D. LESTER, 24, Chicago, Ill., who, during air battles which raged over Italy, Germany and Poland, sent down three Messerschmitt 109s, in the same engagement with Holsclaw.

The first Negro pilot to receive the coveted award was Capt. Charles B. Hall of Brazil, Ind., to whose credit went the honor of downing the first enemy plane while a member of the 99th Pursuit Squadron, now attached to Colonel's Davis' fighter group.

Colonel Davis was awarded the DFC for "brilliant leadership over northern Italy on May 9, when you led your group during an attack on over 100 enemy fighters trying to intercept Army bombers for which you furnished top-cover."

N. C. PILOT GETS OAK LEAF CLUSTER 9-16-44

For "meritorious achievement in aerial flight while participating in sustained operational activities against the enemy," First Lieutenant Vernon V. Haywood, 24-year-old pilot from Raleigh, N. C., last week received a second award, an oak leaf cluster, for his air medal. He was a member of the 15th Air Force Group, now operating in Italy under the command of Col. Ben. Davis.

9-16-44

DFC FOR FLIERS—Here are three of the four fliers awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross in Rome, Italy, Monday, by Brig. Gen. B. O. Davis. Significant is the fact that one of the crosses was awarded by the general to his son, Col. B. O. Davis, Jr. (top photo), commander of the All-Negro Fighter Group attached to the 15th Air Force. Others receiving the DFC were Lt. Clarence D. Les (middle photo), Chicago; Lt. Jack D. Holsclaw (bottom photo), Spokane, Wash., and Capt. Joseph D. Ellsberry, Langston, Okla. (not shown here).

'TOP COVER'

Courier — Pittsburgh Pa.

Bomber Captain Praises Protection Of All-Negro Fighter Squadron in Italy

10-28-44

SOMEWHERE IN ITALY—Capt. R. G Petranek, commanding a U. S. bomber flying from an Italian base, has this to say about the protection the all-Negro fighter squadron is giving the Allied bombing planes:

"All escort work is now done with 51s and 38s. Formerly we had the Negroes flying top cover (top cover is about 10,000 feet higher than bomber altitude) for us in P-47s, but even they have now converted to 51s.

"The Germans knew the Negroes were in the 47s and didn't tangle with them. Now they don't know and tangle with them, and consequently come out second best.

"Those Negro boys are good. Every time we see a Negro flyer, his name is automatically 'Top Cover.'"

TAAF Third Anniversary Program Aired Over NBC; Maj. Gen. W. O. Butler, Speaker

Age — New York, N. Y.
8-19-44

TUSKEGEE ARMY AIR FIELD, Ala.—A general wave of excitement enveloped Tuskegee Army Air Field as most of its G.I. and civilian personnel stopped work for one day when the third anniversary celebration activities got underway last Wednesday, with a special half hour radio broadcast over NBC, emanating from the flight line. The script, written by Privates George B. Oliver and Bill Chase, and edited by Radio Branch, War Department Bureau of Public Relations, Washington, D. C., paid fitting tribute to the many Negro fighter pilots now engaged in aerial combat overseas who received their training at this station since its activation three years ago.

Long before the broadcast was scheduled, the field was jammed with visitors from all sections of the country to witness the history-making event. Adding a feminine touch to the occasion were countless WAC members from Fort Benning Georgia, who were impressive with their military bearing.

The ramp of the flight line was filled for the broadcast. Above, the sky was filled with echelons of fighter, medium bomber and advanced training planes. Highlighted by the brilliant playing of the 613th AAF Band, under the direction of Captain Frank Drye, and the singing of the Cadet Glee Club, directed by Sgt. Philip Medley, the program presented a vivid picture of the over-all training activities at TAAF. 8-19-44

Distinguished guest speaker on the broadcast was Major General William O. Butler, Commanding General of the Eastern Flying Training Command, Maxwell Field, Alabama.

Other participants in this nation-wide hook-up included Col. Noel F. Parrish, Commanding Offcier of Tuskegee Army Air Field; Captain Clarence Jamison, of Cleveland, Ohio, recently returned veteran of the 99th Fighter Squadron; Aviation Cadet Otto McClarrin of Washington, D. C.; Miss Naomi Polkinghorne, Pensacola, Florida; M-Sgt. James Blackstone, Newark, N. J.; and Sgt. Leon E. Smith, Detroit, Mich. 8-19-44

Visitors were supplied with musical entertainment by three outstanding bands from the vicinity, on hand to lend added color. Besides TAAF'S own band, guest bands were a 56-piece aggregation from Maxwell Field and units from Ft. Benning and Gunter Field.

Davis' Fliers Down 5 Nazis

Informer — Houston, Texas
6-17-44

WASHINGTON, D. C. (NNPA)—In an air battle with 20 Nazi planes over Italy, a Negro fighter group under command of Col. Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., sent 5 of the 20 crashing to the ground, according to a War Department announcement during the week-end.

The fighters, flying new Thunderbolts, were escorting bombers of the 15th Air Force, bound for Munich.

Credit for the air victories was given to First Lt. Melvin T. Jackson of Warrenton, Va., and four of his buddies. Lt. Jackson was the ace of the action, bagging two of the Nazis.

Getting one each were Second Lt. Frederick A. Funderberg, 2310 W. Turner street, Philadelphia; and Second Lt. Wendell O. Pruitt, 4569 Garfield Avenue, St. Louis. Sharing credit for downing the fifth Nazi were First Lt. Charles B. Bussey, 1411 W. 35th Place, Los Angeles; and Second Lt. Willie Greene, 29 Park Blvd., Staunton, Va. 6-17-44

This fighter group, which went overseas about a year after the 99th Fighter Squadron had blazed the trail for Negro fighter-pilots, has thus further enriched the tradition the Negro is building in air-warfare. The 99th, when it first went overseas, was also under the command of Col. Davis, then a lieutenant-colonel.

Need Flight Instructors . . .

Race Staff To Take Over TAAF; More Instructors Must Be Found

Journal + Guide — Norfolk, Va.

9-9-44

BULLETIN!!!

COLORED OFFICERS TO STAFF TUSKEGEE FIELD

By LEM GRAVES JR.

From reliable and exclusive sources, the Journal and Guide this week learned that the Army has definite plans to honor its original commitment to give the Tuskegee Army Air Field an entirely colored staff. The initial steps in that direction have already been taken and it is believed that, in the near future, the entire command and operation of the base will be in the hands of colored officers.

Until recently nothing had been done to replace white instructors, operations and command officers with qualified Negro officers. But, the Guide has learned, this will be done in the next few months. 9-9-44

Because of his overseas combat and administrative experience and because he is the highest ranking Negro Army Air Forces officer, Col. Benjamin O. Davis Jr., now commanding a fighter group in Italy, is the most logical choice to succeed Col. Noel F. Parrish in command of the Tuskegee post. Other key officers from successful combat units overseas will probably fill in the other top positions now being held by white officers. Friends of Col. Davis expect him to return to the States this fall.

NORFOLK—The War Department is ready to make openings for Negro instructors to take charge of flight training at the Tuskegee Army Air Field looking forward to the eventual command of that important base by an all-colored staff, it was revealed here by George L. Washington, director of the Tuskegee Institute flight training program, and "Chief" C. Alfred Anderson, head of primary flight instruction at the Tuskegee Institute field. 9-9-44

However, the speed with which this conversion is accomplished depends on whether or not pilots can be found throughout the United States who will be interested in taking jobs as instructors at either the institute or the Army field.

150 HOURS MINIMUM

Mr. Washington and Mr. Anderson are urgently looking for any qualified pilots who have upwards of 150 flying hours who would like to get good paying jobs so that this dream of Negro aviators can be realized. These men stopped at the Journal and Guide office in Norfolk, after flying across country from Tuskegee in a Stimson private plane, to issue an urgent appeal, through the newspapers, for flying instructors. 9-9-44

They would like to make contact with men who have commercial licenses but any fliers, who have the minimum of 150 flying hours to their credit, will be accepted for flight instructors at Tuskegee.

All such potential instructors will be given a refresher course in instructing when they first report to Tuskegee. They will be paid while taking the refresher course. When they first start instructing primary cadets at Tuskegee or basic and advanced cadets at the Army base, they will receive $250 per month for three months. After that, raises will be given at three months intervals up until the instructors are earning $400 per month. To reach this maximum salary, takes no longer than 21 months. Permanent employment is assured.

IMPORTANT STEP 9-9-44

Mr. Washington emphasized the importance of this appeal for any pilots in the country who can fly. He pointed out that Tuskegee Institute, which handles the primary instruction for flying cadets in the Army Air forces on a contract basis, has assumed the initiative in calling to the attention of the War Department an earlier pledge to turn Tuskegee Army Air Field over to a Negro staff. The machinery to accomplish that purpose has now been set in motion, he said, and the first step is to be taken during this month.

Mr. Washington has promised that Tuskegee will supply 20 flight instructors to the Army field to replace white instructors who are there now. Other replacement instructors will come from Negro fliers returning from overseas.

WILEY ON STAFF

Already, Captain James T. Wiley, of Pittsburgh, one of the original members of the famous 99th Fighter Squadron and a flight leader in the 99th before returning to the states, is doing twin-engine advanced training at TAAF and his presence at the base has lifted morale among the fliers and inspired them considerably. 9-9-44

However, this rotation of combat pilots will be a slow process and in order to speed the conversion to a Negro staff, Tuskegee will release several of the pilots at the institute field for instruction at TAAF. But Tuskegee must find replacements for its own staff of 39 instructors and that is the purpose of this appeal.

COMMISSIONED IN ARMY

Qualified men, who prefer to go into the Army, will be given a chance to instruct at the Army field, with a service pilot's commission, instead of doing the primary instruction at the institute field, Mr. Washington declared.

He urged all pilots, who have a minimum of 150 hours, to contact G. L. Washington, Tuskegee Institute, Ala. Immediate employment is available to them.

He Receives His Bomber Pilot Wings

World — Memphis, Tenn. 11-3-44

Receiving his wings as a future bomber pilot in the Army Air Forces is Lt. Harold E. Smith, a native of Memphis and a former resident of Chicago, Ill.

In the above picture taken at the Tuskegee Army Air Field two weeks ago are: left to right: Mr. R. S. Lewis Sr., prominent young Memphis mortician and close friend of the officer; Mrs. H. S. Smith mother of the newly-rated twin engine flyer, Lt. Smith, and his aunt, Miss A. Howard of this city. (Official U. S. AAF Photo by AAF Training Command).

(Copyright. Reproduction Forbidden)

Capt. Mac Ross Killed Near Air Base In Italy

Journal + Guide — Norfolk, Va.

Initial Casualty Among First Five TAAF Graduates

8-19-44

By JOHN "ROVER" JORDAN
Guide War Correspondent

AN ADVANCED ALLIED AIRBASE IN ITALY—(Via Wireless — Delayed) — Captain Mac Ross, of 995 Gard avenue, Dayton, Ohio, was killed when his fighter plane crashed in the hills near this base. Captain Ross was one of the first five Negro fliers to get wings, being a member of the first graduating class at Tuskegee Army Air Field. His was the first casualty suffered by the initial class.

Captain Ross had been operations officer of the Mustang Fighter Group under Col. Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., since the outfit arrived overseas, up until he was relieved a few days before his fatal crash. He was succeeded by 1st Lt. Alphonso W. Davis of Omaha, Nebr.

Son of Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Ross, of the Dayton address, Captain Ross had at one time been commanding officer of one of the squadrons in the Fighter Group. He was a graduate of West Virginia State College in 1940. 8-19-44

His plane crashed here while the veteran officer was on a training mission. The flier, who was respected for his constant attempts to better the lot of the men who served under him, was 28 years old when he was killed.

He is survived by his wife, Lt. Abbie Voorhies Ross, a member of the Army Nurses Corps stationed at Tuskegee Army Air Field; his parents; four brothers, Samuel Jr., Jerry (now serving in the South Pacific), Eddie, and Arthur; three sisters, Mrs. Surethar Buckins, of Dayton, Miss Willa Bertha Ross, of Dayton, and Miss Geneva Ross, of Dayton.

WELL-LIKED 8-19-44

Captain Ross had been given another assignment in the Group after being relieved of the group operations post. He was well liked at this air base because of his fine character and excellent Army record. He was regarded as conscientious and thorough in his tasks and his fellow officers frequently referred to him as a hard worker.

During his tour of duty overseas, Captain Ross had been the principal pilot of the Group's courier plane, a C-78 Cessna, which was used for business purposes to keep in touch with the various squadrons of the Group which were scattered at different bases when the group was flying coastal patrol for its first five months in combat. He amassed most of his flying hours in this twin-engine courier and made several flights nearly every day. 8-19-44

He had had practically no fighter time while doing these other duties and was training in the new Mustang fighter plane when he crashed. This training was necessary for combat flying in the Mustang on the new type, long-distance escort missions which the Group is now handling.

FIRST CLASS

Captain Ross graduated from Tuskegee Flying School on March 6, 1942 along with four other fliers who pioneered in the initial phase of air corps training for Negro pilots. The other fliers were: Col. Benjamin O. Davis Jr., commanding officer of the group; Major George S. Roberts, formerly commanding officer of the 99th Fighter Squadron who is now in this country on a speaking tour; Captain Lemuel Rodney Custis, a graduate of West Virginia State and had started flying in 1939 and had 39 hours of flying time when he reported for Army flight training at West Virginia State College and planned to continue flying after the war in some capacity. He was an Army inspector

8-19-44

WANTED ARMY CAREER

47a-1944

TAAF Cadet Tells How He's Trained to Meet the Enemy

Afro American — Baltimore, Md.

6-10-44

Baltimore Lad Says Learning Is Tough But He Realizes His Success Later Depends on His Study Now

By FRANCIS YANCEY

TUSKEGEE ARMY AIR FIELD, Tuskegee, Ala.—"It's tough but fair, and I know that the training that I'm receiving here will some day help me pilot my crew right up to Tojo's or Hitler's front doorstep and sweep them off with a stick of 500-pound bombs."

This was my introduction to Aviation Cadet Rhohelia Webb of Baltimore, 22-year-old twin-engine cadet in training here. He is one of more than 500 enrolled in the seven-week training class.

Upon graduation as second lieutenant, they will be sent to Mather Field, Calif., for training in B-25 Mitchell bombers now being used by the 447th Bombardment group at Godman Field, Ky., of which they will become members.

Graduated from Douglass High School in the class of '39, Webb was employed at a defense plant, the Western Electric Company, at the time of his induction into the Army.

6-10-44

"Since early high school days I have always been interested in aviation, and when I read in the AFRO that the Army was accepting colored flying cadets, I put in my application, but received the usual run-around for more than a year.

"Up until the time of my induction into the Army as a private at Camp Shelby, Miss., I didn't get anywhere on my application for flying training.

"I was assigned as a clerk in one of the offices at Shelby, so I had plenty of time to write. I'd write one letter to my mother, one to my girl-friend, now my wife, and three to the War Department asking to be transferred to Tuskegee for Cadet training.

They must have gotten tired of looking at letters from me or wanted me to stop using official stationery, for at long last one day my transfer came through.

Pre-Flight Rough

"Primary and pre-flight was rough sledding for a fellow who has been out of school for a couple of years, but I came into my own once I got onto the flight line, for here was the realization of all my dreams, actually flying an Army plane.

6-10-44

"I wasn't any wonder flyer, and it took me a number of sad landings plus a few bawlings out by my instructor before I came through basic.

"My greatest thrill since beginning my flying training was my first training solo. My instructor just climbed out of the ship and after a few check remarks on my landings said, 'O.K., take her up.' At last the moment I had looked forward to was here.

"My mind was a jumble of confusing thoughts and my self-confidence ebbed. I checked my instruments, looked to see if the taxing strip was clear, and taxied the plane down the field. At the runway, I swung into the wind, cleared with the control tower, rechecked my instruments, mumbled a little prayer and gunned the motor.

"Might Make It"

"After a few turns around the field I cut into the landing pattern, cut my motor and glided in for a landing. On the apron, my instructor came over and with a faint smile said, 'O.K., you might make a pilot.'

6-10-44

"That was in single engine basic, but here in advance twin-engine training it's different. Here we begin the practical application of all the principles that we have learned so far.

"In learning to fly twin-engine planes, we are taught many new procedures and have to assume a great many responsibilities which were unfamiliar to us up to this time.

"First we were introduced to our new planes (Beechcraft AT-10 twin-engine bomber pilot trainers) and drilled in the use of check lists, which is checking your plane for any signs of defects showing in tires, wheels, struts, propellers, engines or in the plane itself.

"Next came starting and stopping procedures, take-offs and landings. While in the air, we went through stalls and proper recoveries, with single-engine turns, stalls and landings worked in.

6-10-44

Formation Flying

"We had to acquire proficiency in formation flying, both day and night, with strict emphasis placed on air discipline and the importance of obedience to all signals.

"Then came instrument flying, familiarizing us with radio beam-flying instrument take-offs and landings. In flying instrument, we wear red tinted goggles and the windshield has a greenish tint, the two combined make total darkness.

"We spent bad flying weather days on the ground on link trainers, so the instructors could check our weaknesses and strong points in instrument flying and navigation.

6-10-44

"When, eventually, I'm sitting up there as pilot of a combat bomber responsible for the safety of valuable equipment, for the lives of my crew, and for the success of a skillfully planned mission, there is just one thing that will count: How much do I know? And how much I know then will depend upon how much I learn now."

TAAF Cadets Can Hit Hard

TUSKEGEE ARMY AIR FIEI D, Tuskegee, Ala.—"All cadets learn to fly just as fast as they are willing to apply themselves. If they can fly well in the basic stage, we teach them the transition to twin-engine planes."

Thus spoke Maj. Clay Albright, white, Oklahoma-bred director of advanced twin-engining airplane training here, when asked for a statement as to the progress of the men taking this new type of training.

6-10-44

"Some of the cadets here don't want to fly for various reasons, either they didn't want to be drafted into the Army as privates, feared being sent to other mixed and separate Army camps, or were forced into the Air Corps by social conscious parents.

Problem Men

"These are the problem men of the class. The interested men take on quickly, and as a whole I've put through some mighty fine twin-engine pilots here at Tuskegee.

"I think that when the 477th Bombardment Group is activated and tackles the foe, they will have as much and some more training to fit them for their place in our combined operations as any other group sent out by the Air Forces Training Command.

"Just like my first class, the 99th Fighter Squadron, they will hit hard all along the line."

Morale Shot Among Fliers Training in South Carolina

Call — Kansas City Mo

7-28-44

EDITOR'S NOTE: Because of persistent reports that the 553d pursuit squadron had been "railroaded" from Selfridge field, Mich., to Walterboro air base, S. C., for protesting segregation at the northern training field, the Associated Negro Press sent a reporter to Walterboro to obtain the facts in the case for the readers of this newspaper. What this correspondent, Ernest Johnson, chief of the ANP Washington bureau, found is contained in three articles, the first of which follows.

By ERNEST JOHNSON

WALTERBORO AIRBASE, S. C.—(ANP) — Because morale of men at this air base was reported low—

Because a hero of the 99th Pursuit squadron, back from overseas, had been dismissed from the service through court-martial, and at least two other men have been court martialed—

And because rumors of general unrest and discrimination had been reported, the Associated Negro Press undertook an on-the-spot investigation of the situation.

The outfit involved is what formerly was the 553d Pursuit squadron, which had been stationed at Selfridge field, Mich., until May 7, when it was suddenly transferred to this South Carolina post, in the middle of Dixie and all its means.

7-28-44

Improvement Needed

The picture is not a happy one. There is indeed much room for improvement on the part of the army air forces if training and the establishment—yes, the establishment—of high morale are to be achieved among a group of men who in a relatively short time will be flying high over Germany for the cause of America.

By the same token, these men and related ground personnel have the responsibility of constantly exhibiting their diligence in accordance with army regulations, knowing as they do that despite the demonstrated capability of the 99th Pursuit squadron, there is still a segment of the army which even now would prefer not to see Negroes develop in the air branch of this country's armed services.

The 553d, flying P-47 Thunderbolts, hadn't cracked up yet, as Maj. Joseph B. Price, assistant director of flying operations and training noted. In fact, there hadn't been a fatality among the men since a short time before leaving Selfridge field, a favorable record.

7-28-44

The seed of discord took root at Selfridge. Six officers from the 99th had returned from overseas to work with the nucleus of the 553d, which was activated last November at Selfridge field and Oscoda, Mich. They were 1st Lts. Walter Lawson, Graham Smith, Louis R. Purnell, Spann Watson, Charles W. Dryden and Lee Rayford. The outfit was ultimately to be officered with all Negro personnel.

United at Selfridge

In due course the men were united at Selfridge and for a time had a succession of commanding officers. The last of them, Lt. Col. Sam P. Triffy, came south with them. Under one of these commanders, Lt. Col. Charles Gayle, the men observed a tendency to place Negro officers as assistants to white supervisory personnel in the table of organization. Lts. Rayford and Purnell decided they preferred fighting and so we went overseas with a talked, "especially to the boys who had been overseas."

7-28-44

Real Segregation

The fact remains that the 553d, officers and enlisted men, arrived at Walterboro on Monday, May 7, found themselves no longer a complete organization but rather than the fliers were now a replacement training unit, and the ground crew a part of the base personnel, and real segregation on an army post was staring them straight in the face.

Public relations officers at Walterboro explained that the post had previously been a sub-base of a base near Charleston but more recently had been given full base status. Further, it was explained that Walterboro had, since the arrival of the 553d, become a location for advanced training of pilots who would shortly thereafter leave as replacements for men of the 99th and 332d. The only pilots at the base are colored, except for the various supervisory personnel (instructors). Total personnel at Walterboro was estimated at approximately 1,600 men of which about one-third are Negroes.

Until July 8, the day before my arrival, the Walterboro air base had been under the command of Col. William M. Prince. He was succeeded on that day by Col. Guy Kirksey.

7-28-44

Prior to the arrival of the former 553d a colored aviation squadron (separate) had come in. The number was not large.

Separate Facilities

Altogether, separate facilities for almost everything but hospital care were provided. At first no attempt was made by public relations officers to make distinction between the character of the

accompanied the 553d the races was thwarted after the
had become part of Negro fliers had voted unani-
personnel. 'Col. Prince mously to refuse the separate club.
later in my talk with The undercurrent of resentment
these deductions were developed among the colored of-
When he was asked ficers and evidenced itself in sun-
actual inclusion, he dry ways.

7-28-44

No Reason For Moving

up. Trainees of the
tongues in cheeks.
Selfridge, the issue of On May 5, the 553d entrained
club arose and a plan for Walterboro air base. They
separate facilities for were not told then or since then

7-28-44

553d stuck tong-

7-28-44

While at Selfr
the officers' club
defined: RTU for the colored: ron (separate) and the ground to provide sepa-

why they had been moved south. The accepted opinion among them, however, is that the move was made for the explicit purpose of subjecting them truly to the rigors of segregation as only the south can practice it, and thereby kill their spirit. 7-28-44

That spirit today is low, and the transfer is a contributing factor. None of the ranking officers with whom I talked, from Col. Ivor Massey, deputy commanding officer of the first air force, down knew or was prepared to say why the transfer was made. An obvious explanation might well have been the conjecture made by William H. Hastie, formerly civilian aide to the secretary of war, a short time ago, namely that the main stream of flight training is in the south, and that it is proper that Negro trainees should receive their training where all other to be flying officers are schooled. But not even this reason was advanced by the commanding officers. "I don't know," was generally their reply to the question.

Incidentally, when the transfer was made, none of the colored boys was permitted to fly his craft down although the whites did. Reason given was that eating facilities might not have been available to them at intermediate stops enroute. "That was a slap in the face," was the comment of one of the fellows with whom I said simply that "they should have been taken into the housekeeping," but reminded that "South Carolina has always been a state which believes in the separation of the races."

He was merely conforming.

Pilot Killed 8 Days After Reaching Italy

Journal & Guide
Norfolk, Va.

By LEM GRAVES JR.

AN ADVANCED ALLIED AIRBASE IN ITALY—(Via Airmail)—The death of 2nd Lt. Henry Pollard Jr. of Buffalo, N. Y., 25-year-old fighter pilot of a squadron commanded by 1st Lt. Melvin T. Jackson in the new Fighter Group in this theatre, came after the pilot had only been with the squadron only eight days. 6-17-44

Formerly a brilliant saxophonist with Jimmie Lunceford's famous orchestra, Lt. Pollard, just a day or two before his death, played sensational music with a small squadron band.

CRASH LANDING FATAL

The young pilot was killed in what was apparently a crash landing in a potato patch near Castelnuova on May 22. He was buried with military honors at a cemetery near this advanced base, the following day.

Lt. Pollard was taking a training flight in the Army's widely-heralded Thunderbolt fighter. He called in that he was having engine trouble a few minutes before he crashed. A few Italian civilians who saw the crash told group intelligence officers that the pilot had hit a tree in the field. The plane was demolished and the pilot was apparently killed instantly. 6-17-44

ONCE AN M. P.

Lt. Pollard was the son of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Pollard, 235 Madison avenue, Buffalo, N. Y. He had been born in Savannah, Ga., December 2, 1919. He graduated from Anisius and Syracuse University. He was not married.

Prior to his acceptance for flight training he was in a military police battalion. He arrived in this theatre on May 14 as a group replacement pilot.

He had been on four combat sorties in the eight days he flew with the squadron. Pollard had flown some training missions in North Africa.

FLEW THUNDERBOLT

Almost as soon as he reported to the squadron, he began transition from the Airacobra to the Thunderbolt plane.

Funeral services were arranged by Lt. Vernon E. Punch, the squadron's executive officer. Chaplain Cyrus D. Perry, Statesville, N. C., officiated.

FUNERAL IMPRESSIVE

The pallbearers were: Lts. George Haley, E. W. Payne, Guinn Peirson, W. D. Thomas, and R. H. Smith. The firing squad was under the command of Lt. John W. McClure and included Lts. E. D. Smith, W. D. Ross, and E. L. Roberts, and Flight Officer E. D. Williams, four of whom had come overseas with Lt. Pollard and had joined the squadron the same day.

Lt. Roberts was already a member of the squadron when these pilots joined. 6-17-44

Music was furnished by the squadron quartet composed of: Sgts. Alfred George, N. Herbut, and Eugene Watts and Cpl. James Bartlett. The bugler was Sgt. J. R. Branch, of a service squadron located on the field with the fighter outfit.

NEGRO FIGHTER GROUP SEES ACTION IN ITALY

Age—New York, N.Y.

Washington, D.C.—An all-Negro fighter group, now operating from an Italian base as part of the Coastal Air Force, already has seen several weeks of action, the War Department reported Tuesday.

Commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., the group has been flying P-39 Airacobras on convoy protection and harbor patrol missions along the west coast of Italy. 4-1-44

The group, which was activated in October, 1942, at Tuskegee, Alabama, is the first Negro fighter group in United States Army aviation. Its commander, Colonel Davis, formerly led the Ninety-ninth Fighter Squadron which, as the first all-Negro air unit to enter combat, recently distinguished itself in action over the Anzio beachhead. 4-1-44

During much of its training period in the United States, the group was commanded by experienced white pilots at Selfridge Field, Michigan. In October, 1943, Colonel Davis, son of Brigadier General Benjamin O. Davis and graduate of the 1936 class at West Point, returned from the Mediterranean Theater to assume command and to bring the group overseas.

The 31-year-old lieutenant colonel graduated from the Infantry School at Fort Benning, Georgia, in 1938 and earned his pilot's wings at the Tuskegee Flying School in 1942. In between these times he was stationed at Fort Riley, Kansas. He was overseas with the Ninety-ninth Fighter Squadron most of 1943. 4-1-44

Squadron leaders of the new fighter group are Captain Robert B. Tresville, Jr., 22, of MacDill Field, Florida; First Lieutenant Lee Rayford, 25, of Washington, D. C., and First Lieutenant Edward C. Gleed, 27 of Lawrence, Kansas.

Captain Tresville is one of the first Air Corps graduates of the United States Military Academy at West Point, having completed his flying training at Tuskegee in December, 1942, before receiving his commission in January, 1943. He attended Pennsylvania State College before entering the Academy. His father, a band leader at MacDill Field, holds the rank of chief warrant officer.

A veteran of the Tunisian and Sicilian campaigns with the Ninety-ninth Squadron, First Lieutenant Rayford is a graduate of Lincoln University, Oxford, Pennsylvania. He attended the graduate school at Howard University, Washington, D.C. and taught at Dunbar High School in Washington. He was given his wings at Tuskegee in May, 1942. His wife, Mrs. Doris A. Rayford, lives at 115 S. street, N.W., Washington, D.C.

First Lieutenant Gleed is a graduate of the University of Kansas. He completed his studies at Tuskegee in December, 1942. The son of Mr. Herbert T. Gleed, of 618 Vermond street, Lawrence, Kansas, he was a press photographer in civilian life.

West Indian Flying Aces Are Awarded by Britain

People's Voice—New York, N.Y.
6-17-44

LONDON—The bravery and skill of West Indian fliers is receiving due recognition in the British press. These airmen are entrusted with tasks of importance, and are executing them with a daring and efficiency which is earning the praise of their English colleagues. It is no longer a novelty to see Negro officers in the Royal Air Force, for they are now present in large numbers all over the United Kingdom.

AWARD FROM KING

Some of them have been twice decorated. Recently Flight Engineer Sergeant Benjamin Vivian Hazell, from Eye Lane, Kingston, Jamaica, was awarded the Distinguished Flying Medal.

This decoration, which he received from the King at Buckingham Palace, was awarded for having completed many successful operations against the enemy, in which he had displayed high skill and devotion to duty. 6-17-44

Pilot Officer A. G. G. Johnson, who comes from Nassau, Bahamas, distinguished himself as captain of a Lancaster bomber which took part in the second of the two recent major attacks on Schweinfurt.

The Distinguished Flying Cross has been posthumously awarded to Pilot-Officer Bruce FitzGerald Henry Miller, of the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve, and of No. 103 Squadron. The decoration was awarded for completing many successful operations against the enemy in which he has displayed high skill and devotion to duty. This officer, who was commissioned in 1943, comes from Barbados, and has since been posted as missing (presumed dead).

Unit Renders Invaluable Services In South Pacific

Amsterdam News—New York, N.Y.
5-6-44

U. S. ARMY HEADQUARTERS, South Pacific—An aircraft warning company which maintains constant vigil against Jap planes in the South Pacific is the only such highly-trained outfit operated solely by Negro officers and enlisted men, the War Department reported today.

So valued is its work that the nature of its operations is a closely guarded secret.

Commanded by Captain Herbert R. Orr, a graduate in radio engineering from Howard University, Washington, and former instructor in electronics at Florida Agricultural and Mechanical College at Tallahassee, Florida, the company was activiated in May, 1943, at Tuskegee, Ala. Captain Orr was called to active duty in March 1941. His wife, Mrs. Ruth Orr, is presently teaching at the Florida Institution.

The Technicians

The majority of the technicians received training at the Signal Corps School at Fort Monmouth, N. J. Most of the remaining personnel came from the Army Fighter Command School at Tuskegee.

Officers of Captain Orr's staff are graduates of some of the country's foremost schools of learning. They are First Lieutenants William K. Spears, 1228 N. Missouri St., Indianapolis; Edward C. De L'Aigle, 220 W. 137th St., N. Y. C.; Maurice I. Ponds, 708 K. Van Buren St., Battle Creek, Mich.; Second Lieut. Ivee Timmons, of Miami, Fla., and Revelle Crockett, 888 Union St., The Bronx, N. Y. C. 5-6-44

Typical enlisted men are Staff Sergeant Lawrence S. Miller, 17 W. 111th St., N. Y. Y., who studied intensively and operated an amateur station before joining the Army in August, 1941, and Private First Class Leroy C. Ponds, 34 Troy St., Atlanta, Ga., who completed several courses in radio at the Post Communications School at Tuskegee.

47a-1944
Augusta, Ga., Chronicle
January 30, 1944

Our Negro Airmen

The exploits of American Negro pilots in the thick of the fighting in the Mediterranean area, are not going unnoticed in this country, particularly in the South which produced many of these pilots who are flying American warplanes for the first time in history.

Of the 28 Nazi planes shot down Friday in dogfights over the Nettuno beachhead in Italy, eight of them were destroyed by a squadron of Negro pilots flying American Warhawks. Southern Negro pilots downed four of them, while four more were reported bagged by the Negro fliers in yesterday's air battles.

American Negroes are making valiant contributions to the winning of the war, in many branches of the service, but in no other branch is their work more conspicuous than in the air force. They are proving themselves a match for Nazi fliers.

AIR

Sweet Victories

TIME-Chicago, Ill

On the operations-tent bulletin board at a U.S. advanced fighter base in Italy good news was pinned up last week: an official commendation by Army Air Forces' Chief "Hap" Arnold. Reason for the commendation: the squadron had shot down eight German aircraft in one day.

Gabriel Benzur

MAJOR ROBERTS OF THE 99TH
He heads a good outfit.

four in another. Score for three days' missions had totaled twelve kills, two probables, four damaged. 2-14-44

Any outfit would have been proud of the record. These victories stamped the final seal of combat excellence on one of the most controversial outfits in the Army, the all-Negro 99th Fighter Squadron (TIME, Sept. 20).

Its pilots had survived disappointments, discouragements and months of routine operations in which they did not even sight an enemy. They had finally got their big chance flying cover for the Allies' Nettuno beachhead, and they knew what to do with it.

Shooting It Out. Wiry Major George Spencer Roberts,* 25-year-old commander of the squadron, pulled at his pipe, told newsmen that so far as he and the boys were concerned, it was just a matter of getting an opportunity and jumping on it.

"We have not turned out to be super-duper pilots—but as good as the U.S. Army turns out," he said. "That's important. Because we had one handicap: people assumed we were not producing because we were Negroes. Our men have been under a strain because of the civilian attitude. It is remarkable that they kept up their morale. But now that we have produced, things have changed."

* Successor to West Point-trained Lieut. Colonel Benjamin O. Davis Jr., who returned to the U.S. last September to organize the first all-Negro fighter group (three squadrons).

Latest Tuskegee Class Of Single And Twin-Engine Pilots

Daily World - Atlanta, Ga.
1-13-44

47a

Following graduation ceremonies in the Post Chapel of the Tuskegee Army Air Field on Friday, Dec. 3, a large contigent of pilots received their wings and commissions in the ever expanding Army Air Forces. Single and twin engine pilots kneeling, reading from left to right are: Second Lieutenant Robert L. Martin, 506 Hill St., Dubuque, Ia.; Robert O'Neil 249 Palmer, Detroit; Hubert Julian Williams 501 1-4 E. 48th St., Los Angeles Samuel W Harper, Oliver Springs Tenn.; Charles S. Jackson, Jr. 111440 S. Ashland Ave. Chicago; Charles E. Walker, 1413 Deyo Jackson, Mich., and Kenneth R. Hawkins, 1701 Serritoes St., San Bernardino, California... Standing first row from left to right Second Lts Sanford Maurice Perkins, 2037 Franklin St., Denver Colorado Clarence N. Driver, 942 Firth Blvd., Los Angeles; Charles H. Dukes, 1736 N. VanCouver Ave., Portland, Oregon; Elliot H. Blue Hampton, Va.; Eugene Winslow, 341 E. 55th Place, Chicago; Alexander Jefferson 4014 28th, Detroit; Arthur J. Wilburn, 23 Louis St., Asheville, N. C. and Frederick D. McIver, Jr., 3933 Mount Vernon St. Philadelphia. 1-13-44

Standing second row from left to right: Second Lts. R. Augustus Bynum, 50-52 Elmwood Ave., Montclair, N. J.; Frank E. Roberts, 94 Harrishof St., Boston; Flight Officer Clarence Williams, 3607 Court E. Fairfield, Ala.; Lt. Andrea Prime Masciana, 625 3rd St., N W., Washington, D. C.; Flight Officer Saint Matthew Twine, Jr. 1140 E. 58th Pl., Los Angeles; Lts. Virgil A. Daniels, 1371 Evergreen Ave., Jacksonville, Fla., and William A. Rucker, 143 E. Chestnut St., Washington, D. C. Not shown are the picture are Lts. Charles H. Hunter, 1730 1st St., N. W. Washington, D. C.; Frederick L. Parker 6339 Champlain Ave., Chicago, and Leon Lovelace Turner ,244 P. St. N. W Washington, D. C. student officers having been commissioned in other branches of the armed forces only received their wings.

(Photo by AAF Training Command)

Before things changed, the men of the ing for the all-Negro squadron had started perim 99th had traveled a long, hard road. Train- back in July 1941. The program was ex- there were slights, snubs and delays. The Warhawks, were finally organized as a

squadron 18 months ago. They went to Africa last spring. 2-14-44

At first they showed no signs of setting the Mediterranean on fire: they were too new, too unsure of themselves. In one combat they destroyed a German plane and reported another probable, but two of their own ships were shot down. Some Air Forces officers began to lose what little confidence they had had in the outfit, and reports of mediocrity began turning up in Washington.

Sweating It Out. The 99th flew on, through a long series of monotonous missions, bomber escort or fighter-bomber jobs. For six months the men never saw a German plane. But the outfit was pulling itself together, acquiring confidence and smoothness, developing good flight leaders, and piling up combat time. When its chance came again, over Nettuno, the squadron was veteran, well-led, sure of itself.

Now the 99th is in, and the men know it. They have the quiet, assured, professional air of any proved combat outfit. They look, talk and act like any other group of airmen with seven months' combat flying under their belts. Their ground crews are tops; their maintenance as good as any in the Air Forces.

Like other squadrons, they have their separate mess, quarters and administration. But at Red Cross clubs, movies, officers' clubs and post exchanges they mingle freely with white soldiers and have felt no particular race consciousness. Said a fellow flyer last week (a Missourian in a white squadron operating from the same base): 2-14-44 TIME, Chicago, Ill

"They are a first-rate bunch, fighting the same war that we are."

The Air Corps regards its experiment as proven, is taking all the qualified Negro cadets it can get. Some are training with white cadets as bombardiers and navigators. A Negro B-26 bomber squadron is to be organized this summer.

They Keep 'Em In The Air At Tuskegee

Daily World — Atlanta, Ga. 1-26-44

47a

Left to right: Second Lt. Herbert Harris, of Philadelphia; Technical Sergeant Harold Garibaldi, of Los Angeles; and First Lt. Cassius A. Harris, III, also of Philadelphia, are pictured on final check-up of a trainer plane at Tuskegee Army Air Field, Alabama. The ground crews, engineering officers and test pilots have established an enviable record in keeping Uncle Sam's planes in the air for student pilots and aviation cadets of the Army Air Forces Training Command. — (Photo by AAF Training Command). 1-26-44

Call-Kansas City Mo. 1-14-44

PROMOTED TO MAJOR.—

Captain George Spencer Roberts, of Fairmont, W. Va., commanding officer of an all-Negro fighter squadron in Italy, has been promoted to the rank of major, it has been announced by Colonel Earl E. Bates, group commanding officer.

At the same time, the elevation of 1st Lt. Clarence C. Jamison of Cleveland to the rank of captain was announced. 1-14-44

Both pilots are married and each has a child born since they arrived overseas.

Former Tuskegee Teacher Becomes Air Corps Major

WITH THE 12TH AAF—Nelson S. Brooks, son of Mrs. Rina S. Brooks, 4642 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago, has been promoted to the rank of Major, it was announced by a Twelfth Air Force fighter group in Italy.

Major Brooks, a graduate of Tuskegee Institute, Alabama, where he received his B. S. degree, was a teacher at the institution before entering the service. He is an Executive Officer in his group and was formerly the Commanding Officer of an Interceptor Control squadron.

Commanded by Lt. Col. Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., his group is now operating from Italian bases as a part of the Twelfth Fighter Command. Flying P-39's, they are participating in convoy and harbor patrol missions on Italy's west coast.

College Men Help Keep Planes In Air

Journal & Guide Norfolk, Va. 1-29-44

Aviation Cadet Corps Important Cog In The Army

TUSKEGEE ARMY AIR FIELD, Ala.—Question any air pilot on the relative merits of ground personnel, and he will admit eventually that the mechanic is one of the most important cogs in the operating machinery of the Army Air Forces.

Here at Tuskegee Army Air Field, the "pick of the crop" is regarded as the Aviation Cadet Corps and the enlisted personnel which include technicians, engineers, and mechanics.

An interview with two young engineering officers, First Lt. Cassius A. Harris III, and Second Lt. Herbert Harris, who also serve as test pilots, revealed interesting first-hand information on the subject.

COLLEGE GRADUATES

"About 85 per cent of the men here," he explained, "are college graduates and 80 per cent are graduates of Army technical schools. All of them realize that a successful flying program depends upon the quality and speed of maintenance which covers a 24-hour day and night schedule. Their morale is very high and they absolutely refuse to rest until a job is completed.

"All airplane engines must be changed at regular intervals although because of the high quality of maintenace at this field there have been relatively few changes necessary prior to the stipulated times for such changes. In short, the life of a mechanic is no bed of roses. 1-29-44

"There also are routine inspections after 25, 50, 100, 200 and 300 hours of flying." Of course it isn't all smooth sailing, and gremlins can get busy and cause many a 'snafu.' For instance, one day while doing an acrobatic maneuver in a test flight, my engine cut out on me. My mechanic got so excited he gave serious consideration to bailing out, but calmed down when he saw I would be able to keep gliding. I finally made a safe landing without any mishaps."

KEEP PLANES IN AIR

Just as "nothing can stop the Army Air Corps," nothing can stop these officers and their men from keeping the planes in the air. If an important part is needed, they'll make their own parts or fly as far as necessary to get them.

Most of them would rather be in the engineering section of some bomber squadron overseas, but they adhere strictly to their motto: "If there's a job to be done, we do it!" And that job right now is to keep 'em flying here!

47a-1944

Pilots Down 9 Nazis, Hit More on Ground

Afro American — Baltimore, Md!

10-21-44

Lt. Lee Archer Leads with Three; Friday the 13th Proves Lucky

By ART CARTER
AFRO War Correspondent with U.S. Troops in Italy

[Copyright. Reproduction in whole or in part expressly forbidden.]

ADVANCED ALLIED HEADQUARTERS. — Pressing home thunderous thrusts against the Nazis in wild air battles over Western Hungary, the 332nd Fighter Group, commanded by Col. Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., scored nine air victories and destroyed many more enemy aircraft on the ground in three busy days of operation.

[This brings their total bag to 75 planes; 66 having been previously listed.—ED.] 10-21-44

Encountering German planes in the air for the first time since August 24, the group continued its bid in the Allied effort to annihilate the Luftwaffe by blasting six ME-109's and three Heinkel-111's out of the sky, registering any strength in several weeks.

Three for Archer

As the enemy formation rose to attack, violent dogfights broke out, filing sky with blazing bullets. When the mass of smoke and bullets cleared, First Lieut. Lee A. Archer, Jr., 25, 350 W. 119th Street, NYC, was the battles individual hero with a triple triumph. He sent three ME-109's crashing to earth.

Lieutenant Archer, with one previous victory on July 18, now has four Nazis to his credit, along with Captains Edward L. Toppins and Joseph D. Ellsberry, all in a bid to become the group's first ace. An ace is a pilot who registers five air victories.

Capt. Wendell O. Pruitt, 23, St. Louis, Mo., scored a "Daily Double" shooting down one He-111 and one ME-109. Other pilots who gained victories in the mellee were Captain Milton R. Brooks, 26, Glassport Pa., one ME-109; First Lieuts. William W. Greene, Jr., 23, Staunton, Va.; Luther S. Smith Jr., 24, Des Moines, I., both HE-11's; First Lt. Honee Romine, Oakland, Calif., one ME-109.

Romine had two previous victories while the others had one earlier triumph, with the exception of Captain Brooks, who tallied his initial victory.

"It was a Good Feeling"

Brooks declared: "It was a good feeling. Now I am ready for more Jerries." Lieutenant Archer said: "It was a busy place. There were all kinds of planes, but the Jerries surely knew we were out there today."

All pilots reported that the Nazis fought with fanatical persistence, pressing the attack all the way though badly beaten in the final analysis.

The airdrome strafed on this mission was at Kaposvar in Hungary. The destruction of Heinkel 111's marked the first time that the group Mustangs have downshot these twin-engined, four seated, long-range bombers used extensively by night raiding Germans.

Friday, the thirteenth, regarded by the superstitious as unlucky, turned out to be a field day for the group providing close escort cover for heavy bombers of the 15th AAF attacking an oil refinery at Blechhammer in Southeastern Germany, after successfully accomplishing this assignment, the group formation led by Capt. Melvin T. Jackson, 432 E. Twenty-third Street Baltimore, struck targets of opportunity enroute on their return to their Italian base, ripping to bits the Nazis' rolling stock.

Attacks were launched in the Tapolca area wheere an enemy landing field was severely strafed. Another attack was made in the Bratislava area where the wreckage of trains, locomotives, oil dumps, and a factory were left in their wake.

A flat car loaded with motor transports was also strafed.

Captain Jackson said: "It was a well-timed job, though flak was intense. We left a streak of black smoke, miles long."

Photo reconnaissance of the battered airfield at Kaposvar indicated that the Mustangs destroyed nine aircraft, including one probable JU-52; four medium planes and four small planes. Additional small aircraft were probably destroyed. Photo interpreters pointed out that the true picture could not be based on gun camera film and that these claims were conservative.

Continuing their escort missions on Saturday, the group led by Capt. Alfronza Davis of Omaho, Neb., served as protectors for bombers pounding the Odertal oil works in South eastern Germany. The mission was conducted without incident or enemy interception.

The nine victories bring the group's total to seventy-five air triumphs since June when it switched from coastal patrol work to escort duty with the 15th AAF.

AFRO-American Baltimore, Md.

First Negro Squadron Shapes Up

Argus
St. Louis, Mo.
2-11-44

TUSKEGEE ARMY AIR FIELD, Ala., February 9—The most recent phase of cadet training that has been instituted at the Tuskegee Army Air Field, is the addition of pre-flight bombardier classes. Cadets are receiving the basic course before preparing to fulfill the bombardment group complement of Negro cadets now in navigation training at Hondo, Texas, and the bomber pilots who have completed their transitional B-25 training at Mather Field, Calif. and are awaiting their crews at Selfridge Field, Mich.

Showing Efficiency

These pre-flight bombardier students are a select group. All of them successfully passed the rigid classification tests at Keesler Field, Miss. Among ther number is a group of former aviation cadets who failed to complete their training as fighter pilots. These men are well versed in the fundamentals of ground school work. Their short background and experience as flying cadets should prove of inestimable value to their fellow classmates who as yet have little or no idea of the rigorous training that lies ahead in pre-flight ground school work. But even to these cadets this new type of training will hold some innovation. New studies have been added to conform to the duties they will eventually face as bombardiers. More emphasis is being placed on physics and math. To hit the target, one small error in calcuation will cause a "miss." Coordination of mind and muscle is an absolute essential. 2-11-44

Soon To Man Bombers

When the pre-flight bombardiers first arrived at TAAF, few persons on the field knew of their coming until one afternoon the strains of an unfamiliar song were heard floating down from atop the hill where the Cadet Corps is quartered. It was a stirring song, full of the gusto and strength that typifies the men of the Army Air Forces. Finally the words clicked. It was the marching song of the bombardiers. They had arrived. Everyone was curious as to what they might look like. Swinging down Avenue "A" they presented a picture of precision and discipline. Their faces were eager. They seemed to know what was expected of them. They were the vanguard of the first Negroes that would some day jettison their bombs over enemy-occupied Europe. All eyes were upon them. Although still a long, long way from their "silver wings", these "dummies" somehow lent an impression of supreme confidence. They would make it. They would prove that their part in the all-Negro Bombardment Unit would be successful. They would do a good job of "breaking the ice" for future Negro bombardiers to come.

St. Louisan Among First U.S. Negro Bombardiers

St. Louis Argus Missouri
11-17-44

Two Missouri men who were graduated as bombardiers last week from Midland Army Air Field: James L. Jones, son of Mr. and Mrs. Charles F. Jones of St. John St., Bridgeton, St. Louis County. He attended Stowe Teachers College at St. Louis, Mo. and is a member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity. (Flight Officer), and James F. Trotter, son of Mr. and Mrs. Ray D. Trotter of 2728 Park avenue. He attended Sumner Junior College at Kansas City, Kansas.

It was the first class of Negro Air Crew members to be graduated from this key bombardier school today finished the toughest eighteen weeks prescribed by the Army Air Forces training program, and received their commissions as second lieutenants and flight officers from Col. Charles H. Dowman, commanding officer.

Already skilled as aerial gunners, today's graduates are real triple-threat members of the deadly aerial combat teams. In their study and practice of dead-reckoning navigation they have learned its application to the problem of bombing enemy targets and how it can aid in making evasive action more effective. They have become as familiar with aerial reconnaissance photographs of enemy installations as with the road map of Texas. They have learned camouflage and how to detect it; they have studied the weakpoints of enemy ships; they have learned to identify enemy aircraft. They are bombardment experts.

7 Finish B-25 Bomber Training at Mather Field

AFRO-AMERICAN
Baltimore, Md.

MATHER FIELD, Cal. — Seven officers were graduated from the B-25 transition course here April 25 and have been assigned to the First Air Force at Selfridge Field, Mich. They are: 5-27-44

First Lieut. Louis G. Hill, Jr., Indianapolis, Ind.; Second Lieuts. Winston A. Atkins, Chicago; William H. Farley, Savannah, Ga.; Charles W. Diggs, Roxbury, Mass.; Frederick P. Hicks, San Francisco; Charles D. Hill, 722 Kenyon Street, Northwest, Washington; and George B. Matthews, Los Angeles.

No Jim Crow at Bombardier School

Afro American
Baltimore, Md.

TYNDALL FIELD, Fla.—Cadets at the Army Air Forces Flexible Gunnery School here have been praised for their excellent discipline and have set the highest class marks ever established in the gunnery school, it was revealed this week.

Of the many classes coming here from Tuskegee Army Air Field, starting their courses toward future bombardiers and navigators, it is reported, there has not been one discreting report made. 9-2-44

The cadets praise the school for its "great American spirit," for there is no color bar in the PX's or theatre here, in the classrooms or, in fact, any part of the field.

47a-1944

553rd

553d's Morale Shot to Pieces

Afro American
Baltimore, Md.
7-29-44

No One Can Explain Shift from Selfridge

JIM CROW REIGNS

Hospital Only Facility

Not Separate in S.C.

[EDITOR'S NOTE: Because of persistent reports that the 553d Pursuit Squadron had been "railroaded" from Selfridge Field, Mich., to Walterboro Airbase, S.C., for protesting segregation at the southern training field, the Associated Negro Press sent a reporter to Walterboro to obtain the facts in the case for the readers of this newspaper. What this correspondent, Ernest Johnson, chief of the ANP Washington bureau, found is contained in three articles, the first of which follows.]

7-29-44

By ERNEST JOHNSON

WALTERBORO, S.C. (ANP) — The former 553rd Pursuit Squadron, reportedly transferred from Selfridge Field, Mich., for protesting segregation, is getting a real taste of jim crow here where nearly all facilities, except the hospital, are separate.

None of the ranking officers here would give any reason for the sudden transfer of the unit on May 7 which is a contributing factor to the very low morale of the men.

Couldn't Fly Down

In addition to this, when the transfer was made, none of the colored boys were permitted to fly his craft down although the whites did. Reason given was that eating facilities might not have been available to them at the intermediate stops en route.

"That was a slap in the face," was the comment of one of the fellows with whom I talked, "especially to he boys who had been overseas."

Officers Dissatisfied

Those back from overseas with the 99th Pursuit Squadron who had been assigned to work with the nucleus of the 553rd at Selfridge were: First Lieuts. Walter Lawson, Graham Smith, Louis R. Purnell, Spann Watson, Charles V. Dryden and Lee Rayford.

While at Selfridge, where the seed of discord took root, there had been a tendency to place colored officers as assistants to white supervisory personnel in the table of organization.

7-29-44

As a result, Lieutenants Rayford and Purnell decided that when up, the officers now being replacement training unit (to receive advanced training to replace 99th pilots) and the ground crew a part of the base personnel.

The only pilots at the base are colored, except for the various supervisory personnel (instructors). Total personnel at Walterboro is estimated at approximately 1600 men of which about one-third are colored.

7-29-44

Alibi for Jim Crow

At first, all colored personnel here was referred to as RTU (replacement training unit), and the reason offered as justification for separate facilities was that "the RTU has a schedule to make."

It finally developed, however, that as a means of getting around racial designations for the use of certain facilities, two classes of individuals were recognized and defined: RTU for the colored; base personnel for the white.

Hence, when the sign was put up, upon orders of Col. William M. Prince, over the entrance to a service center where sodas are dispensed, it said for "base personnel," and means "colored soldiers keep out."

7-29-44

When I called Colonel Prince's attention to the fact that the ground crew was a part of base personnel, he said simply, "They should have been taken into the housekeeping," but reminded me that "South Carolina has always been a State which believes in the separation of the races."

He was merely conforming.

Foreign

...n at a recreation club snack bar in India is T/5 John W. Lawes, ...rner window displayer of Glassboro, N.J., who says that he has ...n everything in India from camel meat to water buffalo and he ...ainly hasn't forgotten what good American food tastes like, though ...s been in India two years. To his left is S/Sgt. Joseph Miller of ...ens, S.C., and to his right is T/5 John L. Foston of Piqua, Ohio. ...n was on his first leave in one year when this photo was taken.

AFRI-AMERICAN 3BLT. md

...wo Recreation Clubs ...n India for Tan Yanks

5-27-44

...N INDIA — Two recreation ...bs, one on a West India port ...t and the other in a large ur... center, are being operated ... for the many colored sol... in the China-Burma-India ...tre of war.

...any of these soldiers have ...n here two years building the ...do Road to connect India with ...ma.

...y the beginning of this year, ...-thirds of all troops in the for... area pushing the Ledo Road ...conclusion were colored.

...n other parts of India, colored ...ops have held the vital job of ...ing to open three major ports ...e reception of U.S. war ma... ...n one port, from January ...February 1, 1944, a colored ...battalion set a world's rec... ...for the unloading of tonnage ...incoming ships.

New Yorker Founded Club

...e recreation club in the port ...taken over by the Red Cross ...February, 1943, was founded ...Warrant Officer George R. ...of NYC and was first ...ened in July, 1942.

...The other club is headed by ...Overton of Cincinnati, form... ...executive secretary of the Wal... ...Christian Association ...ton, Del. At present, ...d staff of Americans, English, Indians and Chinese.

477th Bombardment Group

Col. Selway Blamed For Low Morale Of Bomber Pilots

Courier — Pittsburgh

9-9-44

By HARRY McALPIN
(Second of a Series)

WASHINGTON, D. C.—(NNPA)—Three things are uppermost in the minds he enlisted men and officers of the 477th Bombardment Group—the first unit of kind in Army history—stationed at Godman Field, Ky., where morale is low, nerves on the verge of cracking, and tensions are at the breaking point.

r days of "on the spot" in- tion convinced this corres- t that the men want first and maintain their planes flaw or mishap. Second want to be "rescued" from the tern atmosphere into which feel they have been thrust rder to teach them to stay their places." And third—of if not transcendant import- they want to get rid of Col. Selway as their group com- der.

latter, they feel is impera- ls the colonel they see the diment of all their problems griefs.

RESPECTED 9-9-44

these men, especially those have been with the unit from eginning, have not felt always nimosity and resentment to el Selway. They are quick to out, however, that the col- been a different man since cers' club incident" at which was revealed in article—and the subse- ove to Godman Field.

the early days at Selfridge Colonel Selway was liked spected for his apparent in- in the welfare of his men. t few stones unturned in r Negroes in command posi- from top to bottom of the of organization in the fighter then under his command. the group went overseas it all Negro officers from the command down. Col. B. O. Jr., was the group com- der.

nel Selway was always avail- to the men under him and ained a comraderie with his er that bred respect and rap-

the colonel, who is a West er and very ambitious, is not to go counter to the wishes e Air Forces just to prove a liberal and a "good guy." ants to be a brigadier gener- e knows others of his class- s who have reached this goal. re was little doubt concern- the Air Forces' wishes when Gen. F. O'D. Hunter, com- ding officer of the First Air , went to Selfridge after the had upheld the Negro offi- in the "officers' club incident," read the riot act to them. was no doubt of the Air wishes when the unit was from Selfridge to isolated Field, even though the was said officially to be the

9-9-44

men at Godman feel that Selway is leaning over ards to adhere to the Air wishes that these men be in their places."

No longer is he placing qualified Negro officers and non-coms in the positions their capabilities merit. Instead, the apparent and undisputable policy at Godman Field is to place white officers in all command and staff positions, regardless of their lack of experience—just so they are white.

And this is being done with the consent of and also despite an order from the First Air Force.

The First Air Force gave its consent in an order sent to the commanding officer of the 477th Bombardment Group on July 19. That order contained an "authorization for WHITE officer personnel for the Group Headquarters and for each squadron."

Colonel Selway, backed by this authorization, is continuing the "white officer" practice, despite the further contents of the same order of July 19, which says the white officer authorizations "are to be filled by colored personnel before the unit is committed, and authorization for white personnel is to be used only until such time that colored personnel have been obtained for these positions."

MUST BE WHITE 9-9-44

The order says further "as vacancies authorized for white personnel are filled by TRAINED Negro personnel, this headquarters will be notified in order that WHITE AUTHORIZATIONS MAY be reduced accordingly." (Capitals ours.)

By the very wording of the order it becomes apparent that even the First Air Force requires Negroes be "trained," but the qualifications for white officers is only that they must be WHITE.

This single fact has caused more resentment than anything else at Godman Field. And the blame is put on Colonel Selway, whether he deserves to bear it or not.

There are a number of specific examples to illustrate this point.

There is a young lieutenant at Godman Field who has nine months of training as an engineering officer. He has 700 hours of specialized training on B-25's. Recently he left the field to attend school further. When he left he was engineering officer of one of the squadrons.

9-9-44

Upon his return he found he had been relieved of his duty and placed as assistant engineering officer to a white lieutenant. Both are graduates in engineering at Yale, but the Negro officer has additional training plus engineering experience. The white lieutenant has neither.

The squadron commander has told the Negro lieutenant that it would be a gamble on the lives of the men to change now, though he did not consider it a gamble when he took the white lieutenant without experience. We just can't make the change now for obvious reasons, he said.

Another lieutenant, with 7,000 flying hours to his credit (including his civilian flying), and who held a responsible position in the fighter group at Selfridge, is now under a squadron commander who has less hours in B-25's than he has, no overseas experience, and incapable of handling men—particularly Negroes.

Indicative of the squadron commander's lack of knowledge of handling men was his procedure at a meeting he held following a near-riot caused by segregation of the Negro soldiers from Godman at the post theatre on nearby Fort Knox.

9-9-44

Captain Parker, the squadron commander, called a meeting of the colored officers in his squadron. He told them he wanted them to co-operate with him in helping to quell racial disturbances by enlisted men. He said the group is not here to create racial problems. "All we have to do here is to get ready to fight overseas," he declared.

Then Captain Hodge, a Negro, told his fellow-officers that the enlisted men who went to the theatre were wrong. "They didn't have any business over there," said Captain Hodge.

With Captain Parker's approval Captain Hodge said it has been the policy of the Army to segregate for the past hundred years. Such segregation, he continued, was going on before these men were born, and there is nothing that can be done about it. "You have no business to think you can come here and break it up," he declared.

9-9-44

Then he and Captain Parker threw out a challenge. "If this thing doesn't stop we are going to break up this squadron. With a flick of the pen we can break up this squadron and you officers will be sent to engineering battalions and service units," they both said more than once for emphasis.

Three times, in an interview with Colonel Selway, this correspondent asked specifically for the background of training and experience of the four squadron commanders, all white. Three times the colonel avoided answering the question and generalized about the probability that some changes would be made one of these days.

The operations officer of the 617th Squadron, for example, Capt. Cecil Ellzey, has never been an operations officer before. He was a flying instructor. But he is white.

Negro Bombardment Group Welcomed To New Base At Godman Field In Ceremony

Courier-Journal Louisville, Ky.

Group to Get Final Training

5-9-44

The 477th Bombardment Group, one of few such units in the Army Air Forces with Negro personnel, was welcomed yesterday to its new base, Godman Field, by Fort Knox post officials. After training at Godman is completed, the units will go directly to combat duty.

The ceremonies, held in the post fieldhouse, also was a Kentucky homecoming for the commanding officer of the unit, Col. Robert R. Selway, Jr., honor graduate at Kentucky Military Institute in 1920.

Under Colonel Selway's command are some 1,500 enlisted men and 150 officers, most of them Negroes, formerly based at Selfridge Field, Mich.

"I have an overage in every department and the men who make my team will be the best," Colonel Selway told the assembled unit. His motto, which is posted in conspicuous places throughout the field: "Get to Your Damn Guns."

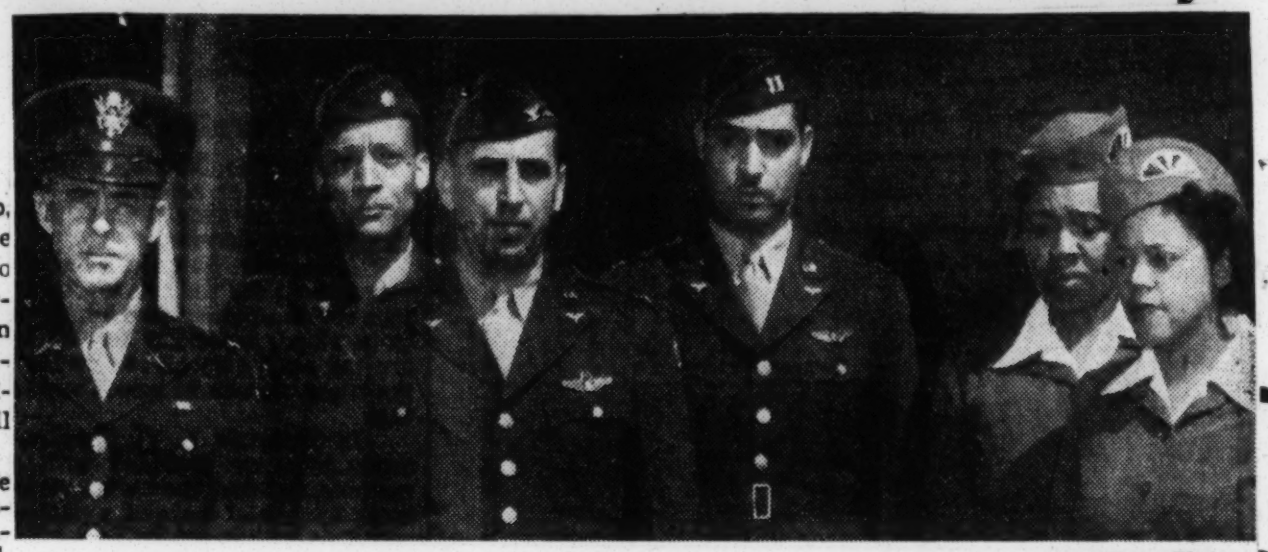
Flies Medium Bombers.

The unit which flies B-25 medium bombers has one citation from the Air Forces for training procedure. It occupied barracks which formerly were used by units being trained at Godman but which moved out several months ago. Safety is stressed in training and the unit has gone more than 100 days without an accident, Colonel Selway said.

Col. Lawrence G. Forsythe, in explaining the relation of Godman Field and Fort Knox, said:

"The post exchange of Fort Knox covers Godman Field. The Service Clubs and Officers' Clubs are separate. The Military Police of Fort Knox cover the whole area including Louisville. All the utilities, electricity, gas, water, sewers, and roads are branches of Fort Knox, but the utilities officers are separate.

"The important point is that, no matter what your past experiences have been, you have arrived in a well organized community, where everything has been tested and a plan of living has been worked out. I understand that the standards set by your commanding officer are high—we have these same standards while you are at Fort Knox or in Louisville. 5-9-44



Fort Knox Photo.

THE 477TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP was welcomed yesterday to its new base at Godman Field. At the ceremonies were, front row, from left, Col. Lawrence G. Forsythe, post executive; Col. Robert R. Selway, Jr., commanding officer of the unit, and Miss Sedalie Crowe, Godman Field Service Club hostess. Back row, from left, Maj. James Ramsey, flight surgeon; Capt. George Knox, senior pilot, and Miss Margaret Collier, senior hostess.

"You will find that a man in uniform is treated as a soldier, regardless of race, religion or branch of the service. On the other hand, all soldiers are expected to behave themselves as soldiers both on the post and off. You will find equal facilities of all kinds are provided in the areas of all the separate units. This has been found necessary on account of the awful distances here."

Major Heverly Speaks.

Also speaking were Maj. P. M. Heverly, post special services officer; Miss Margaret Collier, senior hostess, and Miss Sedalia Crowe of Louisville, who will be hostess for the Godman Field Service Club. 5-9-44

A former Kentuckian, Lt. Col. Eckford Hodgson, stationed with bombardment training headquarters at Washington, was at Godman Field for the welcoming ceremonies.

ACTIVATE RACE BOMBER PILOTS AT SELFRIDGE

Courier-Pittsburg, Pa 2-5-44

SELFRIDGE FIELD, Mich.—The 477th Bombardment Group has been formed here! It is made up of the first class of colored twin-engine bomber pilots from the Tuskegee Army Air Field, who recently were graduated from Mather Field, California.

Among officers assigned with the new unit . . . the same time of the transfer of pilots are Capt. Bascom F. Hodge of the Coast Artillery Corps, a native of New York City; 1st Lt. Robert W. Dockery of the Medical Corps, who is from Greenwood, S.C., and a native of Charlotte, N.C., and 2nd Lt. Willis J. Hubert of the Air Force, born in Savannah, Ga. 2-5-44

The opening of bombardier and navigator training for Negroes, first announced as a possible reality by the U.S. War Department last March, is regarded as an Army "New Deal," outgrowth of the resignation of and expose by Judge William H. Hastie, former civilian aide to the Secretary of War, which brought to light certain army jim crow practices.

The Destination's Berlin-Tokyo! For First Negro Bomber Squadron

New York, N.Y. Amsterdam-News 2-26-44

Destination Tokyo . . . destination Berlin! It doesn't matter which, but soon the 477th Bomber Squadron, composed of all Negro personnel, will be winging it over enemy targets, dropping bombs and destroying positions.

And it is to be expected, that just as the 99th Pursuit Squadron is hanging up a brilliant record on the shores of Italy, the 477th, first Negro Bombardment Squadron, will do well over either continent. . . Europe or Asia.

It will be a little while though before the 477th is ready for combat action. In different sections of the country men are being trained for it. The 21 navigation cadets, who flew their first combat training mission this week—from Hondo Field, Texas, to New York, will go to the War Department on the heels into training to become bombardiers as soon as they receive the wings as navigators. They then will be navigator-bombardiers.

Somewhere else at Army air fields young men are trained to be pilots, crew men and gunners. When they all have completed their training, they will converge on Selfridge Field, Mich., where the 477th Squadron is being trained to fight for positions.

Greater Participation

Establishment of 477th Bombardment Squadron was decided upon by the War Department refused to form a mixed unit, but decided upon the 477th instead, which will drop its bombs at Axis objectives.

At Hondo Field Air Forces School young men learn to handle that pen-rest the responsibility of telling a sheet of cross-ruled paper. Down those marks fly the B's, and other big B's, Pacific, proceed a thousand miles nickel pencil, which, if is a job similar to directing a blind just right will bring a lot truck driver freighting 10 tons of and destruction to the Axis. are willing to bet their lives they can keep the driver on the road. do Field Air Forces School can keep the navigator's brain and nerves On the navigator's brain and nerves by the responsibility of telling a learn to handle that pen-rest the responsibility of telling a ng a few harmless-looking bomber pilot how to rendezvous with a sheet of cross-ruled other bombers in certain formation down those marks fly the at a point 15,000 feet above the e B-24, and other big B's, Pacific, proceed a thousand miles ll drop tons of bombs at to an objective, bomb it, and get l dot . . . Tokyo, Berlin, back to the home base. A desk job, r Axis objectives. his is. But the office is on the **Cool-eyed Bunch** bomber, the desk, alongside the men are : cool-eyed bunch bomb rack.

And so, the first Negroes trained to be navigators . . . men trained for the job described above, have completed their first task. Such are the men who flew to New York this week . . . on the first leg of their journey . . . to Berlin and Tokyo—U.S.A.

The Mayor Greets Flyers in His Office

IN MAYOR LA GUARDIA'S OFFICE at City Hall, a group of the navigation cadets are greeted and shown the "Mayor's palace". At the extreme left is Justice Myles A. Paige and the Mayor stands with his back to the camera. The trip to City Hall, to be greeted by the Mayor was one of the courtesies extended by New Yorkers to the members of the first class of Negro navigation cadets. (Other pictures on feature page).

Jimcrow of bombardiers exposed

New York—The June issue of Politics, a new monthly review, contains an expose of jimcrow conditions in the 477th Bombardment Group, now stationed at Godman Field, Ky. The facts about the situation allegedly developing at Godman Field among the officers and enlisted men of the first Negro bombing squadron are made public for the first time in this article.

Entitled, "The Story of the 477th," the article is signed "Bombardier" and was evidently written by some one who participated in the events described. "Bombardier" tells how the officers of the 477th were refused admittance to the officers' club at Selfridge Field, Mich., where the group was being trained until recently. When they protested, the group was at once shifted to Godman Field, Ky.

"The real reason for the move," observes "Bombardier," was to shift the 477th to a Southern field where the local jimcrow laws and sentiment would be used to back up the Army's jimcrow policies. The Government will go to considerable expense in order to deny its men of arms an equal chance to fraternize on an equal basis . .

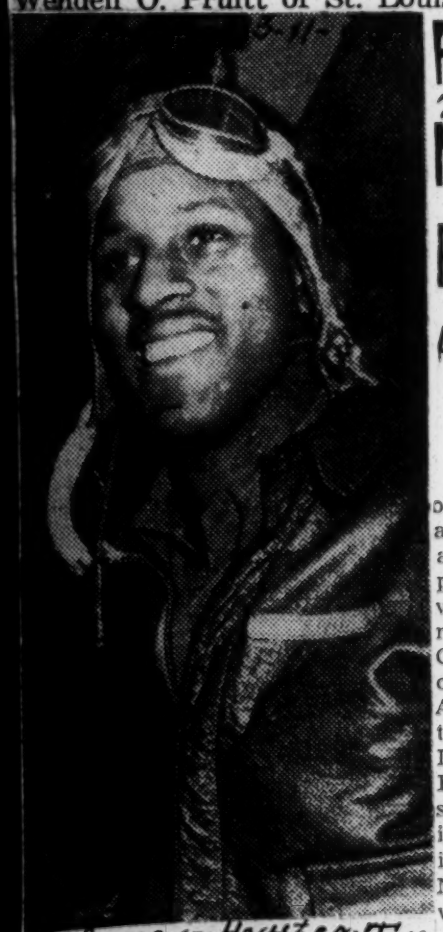
"The 477th is now using, at Godman Field, the same facilities that accomodated the air corps of the last war. Selfridge Field is one of the best bases in the entire United States, and Godman Field is one of the worst. . . The morale of the officers and men of the 477th is now at the lowest possible ebb . . . If the 477th Bombardment Group is to be a credit to the Allied cause and its race, there must be a complete showing-up of the present situation. These men are fighting a battle far superior to that of survival, as many are doing on foreign shores. Their battle is for the Four Freedoms.

B-25 PILOTS . . . EAGER FOR ACTION

These stalwart, full fledged pilots of B-25 Mitchell medium bombers, shown standing in front of a mighty air vehicle at Selfridge Field, Mich., are assigned to the 477th Bombardment group.

Left to right: First Lts. Peter V. Verwayne, New York City; Charles R. Stanton, Portland, Ore.; Charles I. Williams, Lima, Ohio; Second Lts. James Y. Carter, Winston Salem, N. C.; Daniel James, Jr., Pensacola, Fla., and Perry E. Hudson II, Atlanta, Ga.—Army Air Forces Photo.

FIRST VICTORS—These are the P-47 Thunderbolt pilots who scored the first victories in the air for the all-Negro fighter group now operating in Italy under the command of Col. Benjamin O. Davis Jr., bringing down five Nazi ME-109 planes on June 9 in the Udine area in northeastern Italy. Fourth from the left is Los Angeles' 1st Lt. Charles M. Bussey, who shared a plane with 2nd Lt. Willie W. Green of Staunton, W. Va., extreme right. The other three in the order named are: 2nd Lt. Frederick A. Fundderburg of Philadelphia, credited with two German planes; 1st Lt. Wendell O. Pruitt of St. Louis, one plane; 1st. Lt. Melvin T. Jackson, Warrenton, Va., one plane. (Photo by U. S. Army Air Forces).



Informer—Houston, Tex.

FLIES 200 HOURS

Termoli Area, Italy—Captain CHARLES B. HALL, of Brazil, Indiana, is pictured beside his P-Warhawk in which he has piled over 200 hours of flying time. The first flier of the 99th Fighter Squadron to shoot down a Nazi, Capt. Hall has flown more than 75 missions. He has three planes to his credit.—Photo by U. S. Army Signal Corps. 3-11-44

PLAN TO RECRUIT NEGRO CHILDREN FOR CAP GROUPS

Tribune—Chicago, Ill.
7-16-44

Airmen Launch Campaign to Enroll 5,000.

A drive to recruit youths 10 years old and over as members of a junior airman's group and as civil air patrol members will be opened tomorrow by the Chicago branch of the National Airman's Association of America, Lt. Willa B. Brown, director, said. Membership in the association is open to any Negro pursuing work related to aviation.

Lt. Willa Brown. [Harry Johnson Photo.]

"We would like to enroll 5,000 youth during the two month drive," Lt. Brown added. Altho not organized to ease the problem of juvenile delinquency, the program is expected to use the leisure time of young persons who otherwise would be on the streets.

7-16-44

Open Headquarters.

Recruiting headquarters have been opened at 3455 Michigan av., where interested persons may receive application blanks and additional information. Assisting in the drive is Lt. Cornelius R. Coffey, commander of the south side CAP squadron.

Girls are eligible for membership. Youths 10 to 15 will form the junior airman's group; those 15 to 18 will be CAP cadets, and those over 18 will be full fledged CAP members. New classes for recruits will begin at the drive's close in September.

Take Flight Training.

Youths over 16 may take flight training at the Coffey School of Aeronautics, Harlem airport, Oak Lawn, but all recruits will study subjects related to aviation in classes scheduled to meet Monday and Thursday nights in the 8th regiment armory, 3517 Giles av.

New enrollees automatically will become members of the Airman's association and will take part in one of its major activities—entertaining Negro members of the air corps who visit Chicago. Five hundred young persons already are members of the association.

7-16-44

School Is 10 Years Old.

The Coffey school, organized 10 years ago, is the only flying school owned and operated by Negroes, Lt. Brown said. Most of the members of the 99th pursuit squadron, now stationed in Italy, received preliminary training at the school. Instructors at the army air field in Tuskegee, Ala., were trained there. Open to both white and Negro students, the school has an enrollment of 75.

Lt. Brown, co-owner and director of the school, has been flying 12 years. She holds a commercial pilot's certificate and instructor's rating. In 1939 at the request of the war department she conducted an experiment to determine the Negro's aptitude for flight training which resulted in the organization of the 99th pursuit squadron.

TAAF Pilots Make Good in Handling B-25 Bombers

Afro American—Baltimore, Md.
7-22-44

MATHER FIELD, Calif.—When the 477th Bombardment Group now in training at Godman Field, Ky., takes off to "deliver the goods," to the enemy, it will have pilots who learned the fine points of their business at Mather Field, twin-engine bomber school.

Teaching colored airmen how to fly B-25 Billy Mitchell medium bombers is one of several Army Air Forces training tasks being accomplished here. These student officers, all of whom won their wings at Tuskegee Army Air Field, take to the heavier ship with the same ease and skill as they did to fighter craft.

Day Begins at Dawn

The officers rise at dawn to report to the flight line, where they are briefed on their flight mission. The student pilot, co-pilot, and flight instructor then take off on a training mission that generally lasts five or six hours.

When the ship returns, the student officers grab a hurried lunch and dash off to ground school, where they are indoctrinated in the technical phases of combat flying.

7-22-44

What They Learn

One of the most valuable arts they acquire at ground school is the ability to tell in the twinkling of an eye whether a plane is friend or foe.

Small-scale models of battleships, carriers, cruisers, destroyers and other types of both friendly and enemy vessels are floated upon a mimic sea to teach student officers speedy recognition of seacraft.

7-22-44

Practical instructions in confronting the weather, navigation, and the inner workings of their Billy Mitchells round off the well-filled training schedule.

Although some of the colored pilots who have been training at Mather entered the Army Air Forces as cadets, many of them worked their way up to officers' bars from the ranks, and some earned their commissions in other arms and services before they sought their wings.

Tuskegee Pilot Crash Fatality

World—Memphis, Tenn.
10-13-44

TUSKEGEE ARMY AIR FIELD, Ala. — (SNS) — Aviation Cadet Raymond C. McEwen, a graduate of Dusable High School, Chicago, Ill., and a former student of Fisk University, was instantly killed Thursday when the plane in which he was making a routine training flight crashed near this field.

A board of qualified Army Air Force officers has been appointed to investigate and determine the exact cause of the accident. Cadet McEwen, a fighter pilot trainee at this station, was entering the advanced phase of his training. He is the son of Mrs Ethel McEwen, of 2939 Vincennes Avenue, Chicago.

Negro Pilots Handle Bombers As Skillfully As Pursuits

World — Memphis, Tenn.

Air Victors And Casualties

Learn How To Work As Team At Twin-Engine School In California

7-21-44

MATHER FIELD, California — When the 477th Bombardment Group now in training at Godman Field, Kentucky, takes off to "deliver the goods," to the enemy, it will have pilots who learned the the fine points of their business at Mather Field, twin-engine bomber school of the AAF Western Flying Training Command.

Teaching Negro airmen how to fly B-25 Billy Mitchell medium bombers is one of the several Army Air Forces training tasks being accomplished at Mather. These student officers, all of whom won their wings at Tuskegee Army Air Field, Alabama, take to the heavier ship with the same case and skill as they did to fighter craft.

RISE AT DAWN

A typical day for the officers sees them rising at dawn to report to the flight line, where they are briefed on their flight mission. Then they don flight suits and report to the dispatcher and the weather station before heading for the aprons where pre-flighted B-25s await them. 7-21-44

After student pilot, co-pilot and flight instructor clamber into the Billy Mitchell bomber, the ship is taxied out to the take-off point where it thunders down the strip and into the air on a training mission that generally lasts five or six hours.

When the ship returns, the student officer's day is far from over. They grab a hurried lunch and dash off to ground school where they are indoctrined in the technical phases of combat flying.

SPOT THE ENEMY

One of the most valuable arts they acquire at ground school is the ability to tell in twinkling of an eye whether a plane is friend or foe. Master of the knack of differentiating in a split second between Zero and a P-28 often is the margin between life and death in the combat zone. One teaching system employed is the "flash recognition method wherein the profile of a plane is projected upon a screen and the student is given 1-100th of a second to decide whether the ship is Allied or Axis.

Small-scale models of battle ships carriers, cruisers, destroyers and other types of both and friendly and enemy vessels are floated upon a mimic sea to teach student officers speedy recognition of seacraft.

Practical instructions in confronting the weather, navigation, and the inner workings of their Billy Mitchells round off the well-filled training schedule.

Although some of the Negro pilots who have been training at Mather Field entered the Army Air Forces as cadets, many of them worked their way up to officer's bars from the ranks. Some even earned their commissions in other arms and services before they sought their wings. 7-21-44

STARTED IN INFANTRY

Typical of these is Second Lieutenant Victor Brashears, Jr., son of Mr. and Mrs. Victor Brashears, of 2225 Park Avenue, Kansas City, Missouri, who was in the infantry, then was chosen to go to Fort Benning, Georgia, where he attended O. C. S., graduating as a second lieutenant in the infantry. He later decided he wanted to fly, so he went to Tuskegee as an aviation cadet and earned his wings.

Another pilot who first worked his way up through the ranks in another branch of the service is Second Lieutenant Ahmed A. Rayner, Jr., of 2312 Walnut Street, Cairo, Illinois. He entered the Army in 1941 and was assigned to an antiaircraft unit. Soon he was on his way to Camp Davis, North Carolina, where he went to O. C. S. and earned his commission. After serving as an antiaircraft artillery officer, he was transferred to the AAF and won his wings at Tuskegee.

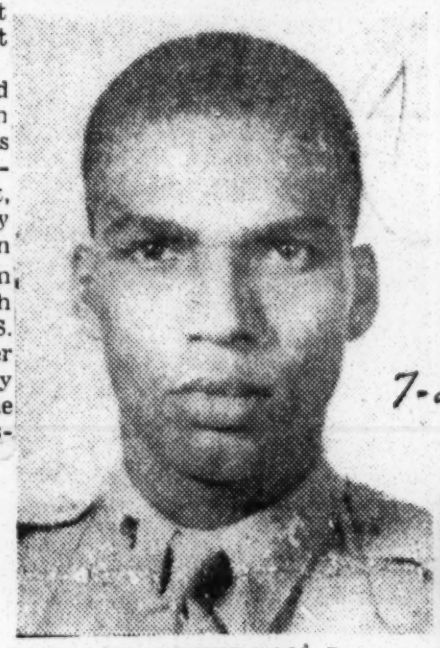
Journal + Guide Norfolk, Va.

7-22-44

CAPTAIN ELLSBERRY

7-22-44

LT. GREEN



LT. JEFFERSON Jr.

7-22-44

LT. JOHNSON

Captain Joseph D. Ellsberry shot down three German planes on July 17, to outstrip any other individual colored pilot's performance to date. Only one other, Capt. Charles B. Ball, now back in this country, has three confirmed victories to his credit. He got one on one day, July 2, 1943, and two others last January 28. 2nd Lt. Wilyliam W. Green shot down a German plane on July 16. 2nd Lt. Samuel Jefferson Jr., 22, of Galveston, Texas, is missing in action, and 2nd Lt. Charles B. Johnson, 26, of 1547 North Gratz street, Philadelphia, Pa., is officially reported as killed. Both ran into misfortune on June 22, during bad weather while flying over the sea. Captain Robert B. Tresville Jr., is also reported as missing from this same mission.

Negro Pilots' Work In Europe Praised

Journal + Guide Norfolk, Va. 7-29-44

Birmingham Alabama

TUSKEGEE, Ala. — (AP) — Maj. Gen. William O. Butler, commanding general of the Eastern Flying Training Command, says the work of the Negro pilots of the 99th Pursuit Squadron battling over Europe "now may be listed as a creditable chapter in the history of the air forces."

Praising the Tuskegee Army Airfield in a speech here Wednesday, Gen. Butler likened the battle of the airfield "to strengthen the fighting forces" to the fight of the 99th Squadron.

Gen. Butler was the principal speaker on a radio program commemorating the third anniversary of the base, and he recalled in his remarks on the broadcast (NBC) the early days of the training when "the eyes of the nation were focused on Tuskegee."

Bands from Ft. Benning, Maxwell and Gunter Fields also took part on the program.

47a-1944

99th

FLYING MAJOR HOME FOR REST—Twenty-five-year-old Maj. George Spencer (Spanky) Roberts of Fairmont, W.Va., commanding officer of the 99th Fighter Squadron, now operating in Italy as a part of the 12th U.S. Army Air Force, pictured in a conference room at the Pentagon building, Washington, D.C., last Thursday, as he explained details of his squadron's combat experience to members of the Press and Radio. The major is home for a rest, after completing 78 missions without injury. He wears the Air Medal with two Oak Leaf Clusters.—Army Air Forces Photo.

99th Fliers Aid In Capture Of Rome

Courier — Pittsburgh, Pa.
6-10-44

NAPLES, Italy—Fighting fliers of the 99th Pursuit Squadron, according to a report from the Air Forces headquarters of Lieut. Gen. Ira Eaker, were on detached service with advancing units of the American Fifth Army Saturday, to enter Rome, the "Eternal City."

dive-bombing against enemy supply lines, motor transports, gun emplacements and enemy communications, to clear the way for American ground forces, including Negro engineer and supply units

EDITOR'S NOTE — General Eaker's report, issued the day before Allied troops moved into Rome, indicates that the 99th was active in the great push against that city. A late AP report, in telling of the Germans fleeing north of Rome, stated: "Most of the enemy survivors of a 23-day Allied whirlwind offensive were streaming in congested retreat to the northwest, at the mercy of Allied planes, which during the day destroyed or damaged 600 enemy trucks and other vehicles." 6-10-44

The 99th, with more than 3,000 combat sorties to its credit, with 17 enemy planes shot down, three more probables and six other planes damaged, is flying P-40 Warhawks and for weeks has been engaged in aerial activity from advanced air bases in Italy, pounding at roadways, bridges and gun targets.

Just recently they were credited with knocking out 100 enemy trucks. They have been active in furnishing air support over the junction of allied forces advancing up the coastal route with the Anzio beachhead fighters.

DAVIS FULL COLONEL; CAPTAIN HALL GETS DFC

Lt. Col. Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., son of the only Negro general in the U. S. Army, was promoted to a full colonel. Colonel Davis, now in command of a fighter group which has been participating in active duty in Italy, was formerly commander of the 99th. 6-10-44

Capt. Charles B. Hall, Brazil, Ind., who has three German planes to his credit, and who is now in the States on a rest assignment, has been awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross . . . first Negro flier to be thus honored... for his "extraordinary achievement" in shooting down two enemy planes during patrol duty over the Anzio beachhead on January 28, this year.

The general order authorizing the high honor was received at the squadron's headquarters on May 25.

Mother of First Flyer Killed in Combat on Visit

Amsterdam News
New York, N.Y.
8-12-44

TUSKEGEE ARMY AIR FIELD—The name of First Lieutenant Paul Mitchell shall ever inspire the hearts of Tuskegee Army Air Field pilots as they continue to avenge his tragic death. The first member of the 99th to die on foreign soil, is especially remembered here because of the victory housing project here, which is named "Mitchell Village," in his honor.

Charming, lovable Mrs. Harry G. Mitchell, mother of the famous flyer, paid TAAF a visit this week, and gazed starry-eyed at the handsome structure named in honor of her son. It was a thrilling experience for her and Miss Janet Sessoms, the flyer's fiancee, who also visited Dr. and Mrs. Bennett Jackson of Tuskegee.

Mrs. Mitchell, who came from her home in Washington, D. C., in 1942, to see Paul graduate, said: "I can't express my emotions at the tribute paid my son."

Gen. Ira Eaker Praises Rome Flying Squadrons

Afro American — Baltimore, Md.
4-29-44

Commanding General Predicts an Active Part in Invasion During Dinner With 99th

By ART CARTER
AFRO War Correspondent with U.S. Troops in Italy

[Copyright. Reproduction in whole or in part expressly forbidden.]

ADVANCED AIR BASE (By Cable, Censored)—Lt. Gen. Ira C. Eaker (Texas), commander of the American Air Forces, inspected the 99th Fighter Squadron recently, dined with Lt. Col. B. O. Davis and his headquarters staff and inspected two squadrons at the airdrome.

On the base field of the 99th he was welcomed by Capt. Erwin B. Lawrence and spoke informally to the pilots on the sloping green.

Special Praise

He had special praise for the work of the 99th on the Anzio Beachhead and in his 15-minute talk he referred twice to the sixteen planes they shot down in ten days. He indicated that a big drive awaited them in the Allied invasion. 4-29-44

On his visit to the 99th he was accompanied by Colonel Davis and Lt. Col. Beauford E. Buchanan, fighter wing executive officer.

At the main airdrome, the commanding general ate a GI steak dinner prepared by Sgt. Carl Brown, of Brooklyn, N.Y., and met Capt. Robert B. Tresville of Florida and First Lieut. Edward Leed of Lawrence, Kans., squadron officers. 4-29-44

He inspected the are and enlisted personnel and talked with group pilots from each unit. It was a photographic picnic for the enlisted men who snapped pictures from all angles.

FIRST ANNIVERSARY

The pioneer squadron closed its first year overseas Monday with 409 missions, 2,644 sorties to its credit, handling two dive-bombing missions against gun positions in Cassino area on the anniversary date.

Week-end activity saw Second Lieut. Floyd A. Thompson of London, W.Va., one of ten recent replacements, get two sorties.

On his initial mission, Thompson declared, "It was the first time I had to fly in formation and weave and dodge flak at the same time, but the weaving becomes automatic when you see those flak bursts."

12 Awards to Pilots

Awards to the pioneer squadron included oak leaf clusters for meritorious achievement against the ene my to eight pilots for the second time, four for the first time. 4-29-44

Those receiving second clusters were Maj. George S. Roberts; Capts. L. Rodney Custis and Leon C. Roberts; First Lieuts. Willie Ashley, Willie H. Fuller, James B. Knighten, Allen G. Lane and Samuel M. Bruce, the latter awarded posthumously.

Initial awards went to Capts. Herbert E. Carter and Erwin B. Lawrence; First Lieuts. Edward L. Toppins and Howard L. Baugh.

Six of the men named for awards are already en route to the States for rest or reassignment.

Transferred

First Lieut. Robert Montgomery, 27, of Lima, Ohio, was transferred from quartermaster company to the squadron as supply and transportation officer, replacing First Lieut. Benote Wimp of Chicago, who was reassigned because of illness. Montgomery has been in the army nine years.

Celebrate Anniversary

The first anniversary overseas Monday was celebrated with an informal supper in which the officers and enlisted men gathered to recall pioneer days. Food was strictly GI but topped off with ice-cream and cake, the latter baked by the squadron's efficient cooks who do an excellent job of keeping the men well fed.

Air Raid

The night was celebrated in definite war-like manner as Jerry paid a visit with an air raid.

Though none of the squadron's men were injured, members received countless scares as parachute flares lighted up the area and sent men scurrying to foxholes and scampering to cover for safety.

Four pilots missing in action

Tribune — Los Angeles, Calif.
6-12-44

ALLIED HEADQUARTERS, Italy — Exactly one year after they flew their first mission over an air base at Fardjouna, North Africa, pilots of the 99th Fighter Squadron, an all-Negro unit now operating from an Italian base, flew their 500th

Fighter squadron during the absence of Major George Spencer Roberts, squadron commander, now on leave in the United States.

Captain Charles Backer Hall of Brazil, Indiana, leading pilot of the squadron, has received the Distinguished Flying Cross. The 99th has lost only 12 pilots during its first year. Five were killed in action, four are missing and three are known to be prisoners of war. 6-12-44

Captain Erwin Baker Lawrence of Cleveland is in command of the

99th In Thick Of Big Italian Push; Wrecks Enemy Supplies

Courier — Pittsburgh, Pa.

6-10-44

By OLLIE HARRINGTON

AN AIRFIELD IN ITALY—With Allied armies pouring through gaping wounds in the supposedly impregnable Nazi defense system strategists have apparently been convinced that Hitler's fortress can be pulverized into submission through close air and ground cooperation. For the pilots in our pursuit squadrons these operations promise fewer opportunities for individual fame, while at the same time they entail more gruelling, nerve-raking work in the very thick of these operations.

Since the present offensive has been launched, the famous all-colored squadron here has been in the thick of it, and it is common knowledge in this theatre that it has played a great part in shaping the headlines which are thrilling the entire freedom-loving world today.

ONE FLIGHT EXCELS

Each flight of the squadron is credited with an average destruction of 15 trucks near the town of Frosinone. One flight, led by Lt. Edward Toppins, San Francisco, swept down an enemy supply line column speeding to one of the switch points in Hitler's line. Loosing fragmentation and phosphorus bombs, our pilots experienced the grim satisfaction of seeing their quarry pile up in ditches along the roadway in a flaming, exploding mass.

6-10-44

TRUCKS DESTROYED

Returning to their base, the flight reported 12 trucks destroyed.

A few minutes later, the field telephone in the operations center jangled excitedly and the intelligence officer was told that the flight had been observed by forward posts of the army. They had actually destroyed 25 trucks.

One of the more interesting aspects of these developments is the fact that Negro pilots form an integral and highly prized squadron in one of the hottest pursuit groups in the world. All the other ships are flown by white pilots in the closest co-operation and with the finest spirit of comradeship imaginable. This tiny base is a glorious monument to what fierce, hard fighting democracy can accomplish . . . if given a chance.

Medical Unit a Vital Part of 99th Fighter Squadron

Afro American — Baltimore, Md.

Activity of Nine-Man Staff During Italian Winter Made It Indispensable to Group

4-29-44

By ART CARTER

AFRO War Correspondent with U.S. Troops in Italy

[Copyright. Reproduction in whole or in part expressly forbidden.]

ADVANCED AIR BASE IN ITALY (By Air Mail, Censored) — During the past winter in Italy the 99th Fighter Squadron learned really to apprieciate the unit's medical detachment of nine men, headed by the squadron flight surgeon, Capt. Maurice Johnson, Washington.

Damp buildings, frequent moving and insufficient heating facilities kept most of the men with colds, two having brushes with pneumonia, but the medical men were always working hard, giving preventive or curative treatment, or utilizing their three ambulances for hospitalization if necessary.

They do 24-hour duty, working in shifts, and during the day maintain constant vigil "on the line" for emergency needs at the airdrome besides handling the multiple first-aid cases and general ailments among the men, native Arabs and prisoners.

Sanitation a Part of Work

Their function, to keep the squadron in good health, involves not only remedial medical treatment, but periodic inspection, checking of sanitation at bivouac areas and mess quarters, administration of inculations for all diseases and line duty on days that the pilots fly.

4-29-44

Pfc. Arthur L. Gooding, NYC, the unit's clerk and the captain's "right-hand man," took a premedical course at Harrison College in British West Indies and worked at New York's Bellevue Hospital before joining the army.

All members of the unit took a medical training course at Camp Lee, Va., or Fort Bragg, N.C., before being assigned to the 99th. Sgt. Joseph Davis, Savannah, Ga., is the medical unit's section leader, holding a position similar to the first sergeant's in a regular company.

3 Ambulance Drivers

T/5 Elmer Acree, Denton, Md., is in charge of the ambulances, each of which is equipped with stretchers, first-aid kits and cr kit. Pfcs. Carlon Shuford, C tage Grove, Ala., and Rubie J son, 27, Picayune, Miss., are the other ambulance drivers.

Pfc. Howard Cunningham, Columbia, S.C., former student at Benedict College, is the surgical technician, while T/5 James Abrams, 24, Macon, Ga., is assistant technician. The dental technician is T/4 Oswald Braithwaite of Memphis.

4-29-44

Captain Johnson once had to deliver an Italian baby for a poverty-stricken native mother. A Howard University graduate, he worked at West Virginia State Hospital before entering the army. He also had experience as surgeon in a Virginia CCC camp, and was a reserve officer in the army for fifteen years.

99th Leader Home; Anxious To Return

Informer — Houston, Texas

6-10-44

WASHINGTON, D. C. (NNPA) —Major George Spencer Roberts, commanding officer of the famed 99th Fgihter Squadron, U. S. Army Air Forces, is back in the United States, but he's eager to go back overseas. He told a press conference here last week that flying is his real love.

Completed 78 Missions

Holder of the Air Medal with two Oak Leaf Clusters, the 25-year-old flyer, native of Fairmont W. Va., has had some 100 hours of combat flying and has completed 78 missions. The 99th, he said, has flown over 3,000 combat missions or sorties altogether.

6-10-44

A sortie is a combat flight by a single plane. A mission is a flight during which there is no contact with the enemy. Each flight is a mission. Of Major Roberts' 78 missions, 73 were also sorties.

Praising the members of his squadron highly Major Roberts declared that his men can do and have done "everything a fighter pilot can do." He also spoke highly of the P-40 (Warhawk) planes flown by the squadron.

"They always brought us back," he said.

Two Killed

Personnel of the 99th, he revealed, has undergone considerable change. Two pilots are known to have been killed in action, three others are missing, and one is believed to be a prisoner of war. Others have been grounded because of fatigue and a few have returned to the United States to become instructors.

The squadron's total bag of 17 enemy planes was accounted for by the Major by the fact that the major portion of the group's activity has not plunged them into many "dog fights."

As bomber escorts, and air support for ground forces, however, the outfit has piled up a formidable tally of enemy trucks, jeeps, dumps and other installations and they have done considerable ground strafing of machine gun emplacements and enemy troop columns.

The youthful major emphatically declared that no question of racial discrimination figured in the treatment of the squadron at any time, adding that on several occasions his pilots had flown with white pilots. He was convinced also, he said, that there had been no difference in the training received by the 99th pilots from that of any others.

6-10-44

"As far as I have been able to observe,' he declared, "our pilots have had just as much training as any others."

332nd Sees Action

Call — Kansas City, Mo.

Col. Davis Leads Fighter Group

3-31-44

WASHINGTON. — The 322nd fighter group, now operating from an Italian base as part of the Coastal Air Force, already has seen several weeks of action, the War Department reported this week.

Commanded by Lt. Colonel Benjamin O. Davis Jr., the group has been flying P-39 Airacobras on convoy and protection and harbor patrol missions along the west coast of Italy.

Fidst Fighter Group

The group, which was activated in October, 1942, at Tuskegee, Ala., is the first Negro fighter group in United States Army aviation. Its commander, Colonel Davis, formerly led the 99th Fighter Squadron which, as the first all-Negro air unit to enter combat, recently distinguished itself in action over the Anzio beachhead.

During much of its training period in the United States, the group was commanded by experienced white pilots at Selfridge Field, Mich. In October, 1943, Colonel Davis, son of Brigadier General Benjamin O. Davis, and graduate of the 1936 class at West Point, returned from the Mediterranean Theater to assume command and to bring the group overseas.

3-31-44

The 31-year-old lieutenant colonel graduated from the Infantry School at Fort Benning, Ga., in 1938 and earned his pilot's wings at the Tuskegee Flying School in 1942. In between these times he was stationed at Fort Riley, Kas. He was overseas with the Ninety-ninth Fighter Squadron most of 1943.

3-31-44

Squadron Leaders

Squadron leaders of the new fighter group are Captain Robert B. Tresville, Jr., 22, of MacDill Field, Fla.; First Lieutenant Lee Rayford, 25, of Washington, D. C., and First Lieutenant Edward C. Gleed, 27, of Lawrence, Kas.

Captain Tresville is one of the first Air Corps graduates of the United States Military Academy at West Point, having completed his flying training at Tuskegee in December, 1942, before receiving his commission in January, 1943. He attended Pennsylvania State college before entering the Academy. His father, a band leader at MacDill Field, holds the rank of chief warrant officer.

A veteran of the Tunisian and Sicilian campaigns with the 99th Squadron, First Lieutenant Rayford is a graduate of Lincoln university, Oxford, Pa. He attended the graduate school at Howard University, Washington, D. C., and taught at Dunbar high school in Washington. He was given his wings at Tuskegee in May, 1942. His wife, Mrs. Doris A. Rayford, lives at 115 S. St., N. W. Washington, D. C.

3-31-44

First Lieutenant Gleed is a graduate of the University of Kansas. He completed his studies at Tuskegee in December, 1942. The son of Herbert T. Gleed, of 618 Vermont St., Lawrence, Kas., he was a press photographer in civilian life.

47a-1944

99th

Journal + Guide — Norfolk, Va.

Anniversary

A year ago they marched aboard a hugh transport in New York for the first overseas trip by any Negro tactical unit in the Army Air Forces. The date of this issue marks the end of twelve months' overseas service for the 99th Fighter Squadron. It also brings back memories . . . memories of a voyage that had no parallel in U. S. military annals, which hasn't since been duplicated, probably won't be in this war. 4-15-44

In another article in this issue the Guide's Lem Graves Jr., currently based with the 99th in Italy, writes a carefully documented review of that first year in combat. It is strongly recommended to readers of this column who want to survey a fast-moving, exciting history-making year of aerial warfare by America's bronze fighter pilots.

Graves writes that the most important accomplishment of the 99th was proving that Americans of all races and colors could fight side by side without friction when uninhibited by artificial and needless regulations. He sees in the integration of the 99th Fighter Squadron with the 79th Fighter Group a moving demonstration of the rightness of democracy in action.

This fact which the Guide's war correspondent finds is now accomplished actually was in the making on that April 15th a year ago.

The task of loading more than 4,000 U. S. troops aboard and making ready for embarkation ran well into that night. Early next morning we pulled in our lines and headed east. At breakfast we saw the demonstration begin.

We had to wait in line more than an hour for that first meal. The three separate shifts for the officers mess had not yet been organized and eating was on a first-come-first-served basis. But up and down the long que trailing from the dining room down the corridor youthful white pilots quickly broke the ice and struck up conversations with our own fliers.

Common Interest Made Them Friends

4-15-44

The gravitation of men with a common interest, flying, and a common purpose, triumph over the Nazis, was as instantaneous as it was inevitable. In this situation it was not impeded by unnatural restraints. There were no "colored" and "white" signs, real or imaginary, on this ship. Here, for the first time in many of our lives, we could see what happens when colored and white soldiers are thrown together without custom-made barriers between them.

They talked about planes and flying and acrobatics and technique, and the thousand and one other things which occupy the minds of pilots. Friendships started right there in that line that continued and matured during the next eight days on the ocean. By the time we reached the dining room, some of these mixed groups were so engrossed in their conversations that they took them to their tables.

That first meal was in the nature of a free-for-all. You sat anywhere there was a vacant seat. But at the next meal, supper, we were to choose our permanent seats; wherever we sat then we would have to sit for the rest of the voyage. That offered any of the boys who had acquired undesirable company in the outset an opportunity to escape it for the rest of the trip without embarrassment. 4-15-44

Do you think these interracial friendships collapsed under that circumstance? You're wrong if you do. On the contrary we had the unique spectacle throughout the voyage of Negro flying officers scattered over the dining room at tables with white officers . . . and as happy and contented as they could be.

Ghost Club Candidate

4-15-44

Among these replacement pilots was Lt. P. H. Wilkins (see cut), a very quiet and pleasant chap from Kalispell, Montana, who sat around the decks reading most of the time when he wasn't engaging in conversation. During his training in California he had made the front pages of most western papers when his plane tore off the top of a telegraph pole in an emergency landing. Wilkins walked away from the crack-up with only minor injuries.

He had interrupted his reading to talk to Lt. William R. Thompson, Pittsburgh, armament officer of the 99th, when the Guide photographer caught them in this informal pose.

I never saw or head about him after we landed. Wonder if he's one of America's ace fighter pilots now, with a dozen or more victories to his credit? 4-15-44

The group of white pilots who has crossed with us, I learned later were assigned to a number of Air Forces commands. Some were flying P-38 Lightnings, some Spitfires, some A-36 Invader fighter-bombers, some P-40 Warhawks, some P-51 Mustangs.

It was interesting because aboard ship one of the liveliest debates was on the relative merits of the P-40 and the P-39 Aircobra. The 99th fliers stuck up for the Warhawks they were trained in while the white pilots argued the superiority of the P-39 Aircobra, the ship in which they had been readied for combat.

Unfortunately it was "no contest," because in that theatre the Aircobra was being used only for costal patrol.

Some of the friendships continued after we debarked. From time to time one of these chaps would drop down on our field and spend a few hours talking over the days between.

Journal + Guide — Norfolk, Va.
4-15-44

LT. THOMPSON (left) talks with Lt. Wilkins on shipboard.

Infantryman Tells How 99th Squadron Knocked Out Tanks

Journal + Guide — Norfolk, Va.
4-15-44

WASHINGTON, D. C. — An infantryman, back in this country under the Army's rotation plan after eighteen month's service overseas, related to officials of the War Department today how the Ninety-ninth Fighter Squadron swooped down through a hail of heavy flak and knocked out three enemy tanks on the Allied Fifth Army front in Italy.

Sergeant William H. Snider 27, of Baldwin, Md., a platoon sergeant in the Third Infantry Division, told the story. He took part in the invasion of North Africa and Sicily, fought in Tunisia and close to Cassino, and was recently in action at the Anzio beachhead. 4-15-44

The returned doughboy went through months of combat without being wounded, though he spent 21 days in a hospital with sprains of the ankle and hip after an artillery shell landed eight feet from him at Mount Rotondo, Italy.

Sergeant Snider said that the infantry an dair corps were working as a close-knit team in the Italian campaign.

WILDEST FELLOWS

"We were helped a lot by the Ninety-ninth Fighter Squadron," he said. "Those colored fighters were the wildest fellows I've ever seen. It didn't make any difference what you wanted — If you asked them, they'd deliver."

Once, Sergeant Snider reported, his outfit was held up during an advance by three enemy tanks, and called for help from the Negro fliers. 4-15-44

"We were pinned down and couldn't even raise our heels," he said. "Then the planes came along. They swooped down to 300 feet, right through lots of heavy flak, and knocked those three tanks out."

Sergeant Snider will be reassigned at the conclusion of his furlough period.

Ten Join 99th, Five For Group

Journal + Guide
Norfolk, Va.
4-12-44

Promotions Are Announced In New Fighter Group

4-15-44

By LEM GRAVES Jr.
Guide War Correspondent
(Copyright. Reproduction Prohibited.)

ADVANCED ALLIED AIR BASE, April 11—(By Cable via RCA)—Ten replacement pilots joined the 99th Fighter Squadron Monday (April 10) while five new men came to the new fighter group. All

99th in a short orientation meeting conducted by Major George S. Roberts, commanding officer; Capt. Charles B. Hall, Capt. Lemuel E. Custis, and Lt. John H. Rogers. They were told the 99th is the son of Mrs. Floyd A. Thorjson, Lon-
2nd Lt. Edward M. Thomas, Elmira, N. Y.
2nd Lt. Charles W. Tate, Pitts-burgh, Pa.
2nd Lt. Theodore Allen Wilson, Roanoke, Va.
2nd Lt. William N. Allsbrook, Kansas City, Kan.
2nd Lt. Woodrow F. Morgan, Omaha, Neb.
2nd Lt. Theodore H. Mills, New York City.
ORIENTATION MEETING
99th replacements are as follows:
2nd Lt. James B. Brown, Los Angeles, Calif.
2nd Lt. Neil V. Nelson, Chicago, Ill.
2nd Lt. Clarence W. Dart Jr., Rochelle, N. Y.
2nd Lt. Floyd A. Thorjson, Lon-
2nd Lt. Charles B. Hall, Capt. Lem-
Lt. Wilson is the son of Mrs. Julia B. Wilson of 47 Patton avenue, Roanoke, Va. His wife, Mrs. Doris S. Wilson, lives at 213 West 123rd street, New York City.
They were also imbued with the fighting and efficient
New pilots were welcomed to the spirit of the 99th. 4-15-44

Replacements for the new fighter group are:

2nd Lt. Earl Sherrod, Columbus Ohio.

2nd Lt. Purnell Goodenuff, Birmingham, Ala.

2nd Lt. Norman W. Scales, Austin, Texas.

2nd Lt. Christopher W. Newman, St. Louis, Mo.

2nd Lt. Edgar L. Jones, New York, N. Y. 4-15-44

TWO MADE MAJORS

Three important promotions were announced in the new fighter group by Lt. Col. B. O. Davis Jr., commanding officer. Capt. Nelson S. Brooks of Chicago, Ill., group executive officer, and Vanche H. Marshbanks Jr. of Los Angeles, Calif., group surgeon, are now majors. Squadron Commander Lee Rayford has been named captain.

Assignment changes effected at the same time moved Lt. William Banks of Chicago from the group supply branch to the supply unit of Lt. Robert B. Tresville's squadron. Lt. William Wyatt, formerly of the group supply division, has been made group orientation and assistant special services officer.

Lt. Roland Daniels, a former squadron executive officer, is the new group supply officer.

Other intra-group pilot changes which bolstered the two squadrons doing the greatest amount of work saw Second Lieutenants Andrew Naples of Orange, Va., Leonard Turner, Allen Ballard, Walter Foreman, Virgil Richardson, Stirling Penn, and William Williams transferred from Lt. Rayford's squadron to Lt. Tresville's fliers.

Also Second Lieutenants Claiborne Lockett and John H. Powell, transferred from Lt. Rayford's squadron to First Lieut. Edward Gleed's fighters.

Lt. Gleed led a formation Monday on their first combat mission over flak positions deep behind the Adolph Hitler and Gustav lines in a battle sector. The men were eager for actual combat with enemy fighters. 4-15-44

They also like the prospects of the new assignments which took them from coastal and harbor patrol to bombing and strafing key targets supporting German lines. However, they are still engaged in patrol duty, which calls for protection of a major Italian port area.

On Monday Lt. Gleed's formation discovered new Jerry ack-ack position. The men, according to operational reports, reacted splendidly to their first exposure to flak.

VETERAN TRIO . . . READY FOR HOP

Courier — Pittsburgh Pa. 4-29-44

4-29-44

The three veteran airmen in top photo (left to right), 1st Lt. Herbert V. Clark, of Pine Bluff, Ark.; 1st Lt. William A. Campbell, of Tuskegee, and 1st. Lt. Spann Watson, Hackensack, N. J., combat pursuit pilots of the 99th Fighter Squadron, completed their quota of missions in the African campaign and have returned to supervise, along with white pilots, the training of members of the 553rd Fighter Squadron at Selfridge Field, Mich. The squadron is a replacement training unit. 4-29-44

In bottom photo, 2nd Lt. Vincent J. Mason, of the 553rd Fighter Squadron, walks out to his ship. The Orange, N. J., flyer is a graduate of Tuskegee Army Air Field. Pursuit pilots come directly to Selfridge, while bomber pilots take at least 105 hours additional transitional training at Mather Field, Calif.—Photos by Mort Walton, courtesy of The Detroit Free Press.

Credit Belongs To Team Work Says Capt. Hall In Chicago

Journal + Guide — Norfolk, Va.

7-1-44

CHICAGO, Ill.—(ANP)—Capt. Charles Hall, flight leader of the 99th Squadron whose exploits in the air include the bringing down of the first enemy plane accounted for by the Tuskegee trained flyers when they operated from North Africa and who since that time has downed two more German fighter planes, was a visitor in Chicago for two days last week.

Accompanied by his wife, Mrs. Maxine Parrish Hall of Terre Haute, Ind., and Lt. Willie Ashley of Sumter, S. C., also of the 99th, Capt. Hall paused here enroute to Atlantic City where the two birdmen will take a rest before being reassigned to duty. The visit of the pilots to America is routine, all flyers being sent home after they have flown a sufficient number of sorties and missions. Capt. Hall has flown 108 missions and 89 sorties, the difference between the former and the latter being that a sortie is made over enemy territory or in areas where he was in contact with enemy fighters.

Modest in manner and youthful in appearance, Capt. Hall disclaimed any unusual ability on his own part. He said that whatever credit might be due belonged to his flying mates, the wingmen who, he explained, flew on either side of him and protected him when he was engaged in a fight and to the ground crew which kept their planes in serviceable condition.

"I LIKE FLYING" 7-1-44

"I like flying," said the captain, speaking at a luncheon given in honor of the flyers at the Hotel LaSalle Tuesday by the Chicago Urban league, "I volunteered for the air although I was too young for the draft. For years I had been dreaming and hoping for a chance to fly. I hope to see the day when our boys will be flying everything the Army has to offer, bombers, and every other type plane other than this new rocket which the Germans are using."

Capt. Hall said he preferred not to discuss the speeds of various types of planes but that the P-40 which the 99th was flying was a good plane and fast enough when you really needed it to be. 7-1-44

"I urge all of you to stop thinking in terms of praise for pilots alone or men who happen to bring down a plane," he said. "It's team work which counts. If my wingmen were not protecting me they would perhaps be adding a kill to their score. You never hear of our ground crew, one of the finest in the entire airforce, most of its men are college trained and were schooled in mechancis at Rantoul and Tuskegee, but they are just as much the heroes of this war as the men who fly. And don't forget the engineers and the quartermaster. Each one of these outfits is doing an important and a necessary job. Give them all the credit."

HASN'T GOTTEN DFC

Capt. Hall said that the first combat flight made by the 99th was by Lt. Bill Campbell of Tuskegee and himself on June 2. He was wearing the ribbon of the Distinguished Flying cross although he said that while he had the orders, it had never been formally presented, not having caught up with him yet. He also wore the Air medal and two clusters. 7-1-44

Much of the experience of the 99th has been in service which while dangerous was not "in the big league," Capt. Hall explained "We knew the folk back home were wondering about our being over there for five months without having a fight getting a plane," he said, "but we were doing patrol duty and were not in contact with fighters."

He predicted that if the 99th or the Negro fighter group got a chance to get over France or into the more active sectors that a lot would be heard about their achievements. While here he gave a War Bond talk at the huge Douglass Aircraft plant which proved so popular that they asked for him and Lt Ashley to return.

ASHLEY AND FLAK

Lt. Ashley told the guests at the Hotel LaSalle luncheon, "I kept hearing the fellows talking about 'flak' but I really didn't know what they were talking about. I was told to join a group which was going out to escort a bomber on a mission. I got together and we zoomed on up. I figured it would be more or less like flying at Tuskegee and while mildly excited, wasn't worried at all. 7-1-44

"Suddenly I saw a puff of black smoke under one of the bombers. 'Humph!' I thought, 'that bomber is having engine trouble.' Then I saw three or four more puffs of black smoke around two or three other bombers. 'Gee,' I said to myself, 'there are a lot of these bombers having engine trouble and just them, one of those puffs exploded right in front of me.

"I knew I wasn't having any engine trouble but it wasn't until I got back on the ground and was relating my experiences to some of the fellows that I learned that those puffs were shells from a 90 millimeter gun throwing flak at me."

Getting his first "probable" was an interesting experience for Ashley too, he said in response to a question from one of the diners as to his method of determining whether a plane approaching him was an enemy or one of his own country's fliers. 7-1-44

JOINS GERMAN PLANE

"I was flying with a group but one of our fellows, the tail of his plane did not look just ex- actly like mine, then I observed sights on him and he wasn't do- ing diving down, got separated," that his nose was somewhat dif- about our orders not to follow he said. "I flew on and sudden- ferent, too. Then shockingly I a burst and then another burst ly saw a plane just ahead of me. saw he had the Nazi cross. company with our own, so I My orders had been never to and smoke began to come from stay alone but always to seek "I began to feel funny and made it on back to company for protection, so I his engine. He started spiral- sort of jittery. I said to myself ling down and drew near this fellow. I looked and me right after a probable that I'd better lace up my boots instead of a certainty," him. We kept him over closely and noticed and get going. The flak was another until he levelled off that while I had thought he was coming pretty hard and I was about the tree tops and I was ley did down was a Focke Wulf

Test Pilots Overseas Sent On Proverbial Merry-Go-Round

Journal + Guide — Norfolk, Va.

6-24-44

By Lem Graves Jr.

Journal and Guide War Correspondent

(Copyright. Reproduction Forbidden)

AN ADVANCED ALLIED AIRBASE IN ITALY—via airmail—What has happened to 2nd Lt. Wiley W. Selden, Jr., popular young Norfolk, Va. flyer, shouldn't happen to Hitler.

Through no fault of his own, he's been on the U. S. Army's buck-passing merry-go-round longer than anybody I know. And I was interested in his case since I had known the youth through high school, college and the days when he was kicking around his home town as one of the more eligible young bachelors.

Now, I am happy to report, Lt. Selden is finally set in what appears to be a permanent spot. He is engineering officer of the 99th Fighter Squadron overseas and in a position which will ultimately bring him a captaincy —provided he is left alone long enough to earn the rank.

The youngster, son of a well known Norfolk letter carrier and a member of the Selden clan which has been pretty well integrated into the civic life of Norfolk for many years, is a flying officer. I don't know exactly how he got started on this merry-go-round but I do know that he's been one of the air corps step-children for quite a time.

6-24-44

PICKED AT RANDOM

Shortly after he obtained his wings as a pilot officer, Lt. Selden was picked—at random, he says—from among the graduates to become a test pilot in the service group then being formed. There were four of these lads in that situation.

That would have been all right but he was never given the opportunity to learn to fly all the different kinds of aircraft a service group test pilot must be able to fly if he is to do a satisfactory job.

When time came to come overseas, Selden did not have enough time in any single fighter ship to qualify as a fighter pilot and had not enough experience flying a variety of craft to be a capable test pilot. It seemed that he had just been wasting the months between his graduation and his shipment overseas trying to persuade the group's commanding officer, white, that he should be getting either one kind of experience or the other.

6-24-44

The net result was that he arrived overseas fit for neither job and has been bounced around from one spot to another trying to get properly fitted to do the job Uncle Sam needed him for.

Those in the know seem to feel that there was a deliberate attempt to keep these lads from becoming versatile test pilots because the training would have been so extensive and so versatile that they would have been in prior positions in post-war commercial aviation. Be that as it may, there is definite basis for the conclusion that these men were never allowed to get the training that test pilots must have.

TRANSFERRED BACK

First they tried him in the engineering section of a service squadron. Then they transferred him to a fighter squadron as a fighter pilot but it was found that he would have required many months of training in the Airacobra, before qualifying for that job. A few days later, he was transferred back to the service squadron and given a job in tech supply. Shortly afterwards, with the return of 1st Lt. Omar Blair, of San Francisco, to his post, Selden was placed in squadron supply.

6-24-44

Any corporal can handle squadron supply and you don't need to go through pre-flight, primary, basic, and advanced flight training to learn how to do that job. Obviously, he was out of place here.

Finally, an opening in engineering occurred in the 99th Fighter Squadron when Captain H. Eugene Carter, of Tuskegee Institute, Ala., returned home on rotation. And after Lt. Charles P. Bailey, of Punta Gorda, Fla., and Lt. Pearlie Saunders, of Washington, both Warhawk fighter pilots who could scarcely be spared from their regular flying jobs, had taken a fling at engineering, young Selden was brought in.

He started as third assistant engineering officer but in a couple of weeks had moved up to the top job and Bailey and Saunders were free to continue their dive-bombing and strafing assignments.

FLYING PAY 6-24-44

Now Lt. Selden keeps the Warhawks ready for work and test hops them after major repairs, thereby qualifying for his flying pay. Considering the fact that he was robbed of a chance to learn fighter techniques, he's fairly happy in this spot and seems destined to get along all right in it. And he still gets a chance to do the thing he likes to do—fly.

Similarly situated in what we in the Army call a "swindle" were the other three test pilots: Lts. Hezekiah Lacy, Detroit; Lt. Robert Alexander, Harrisburg, Pa.; and Lt. W. Garfield Wilkinson, Camden, N. J.

Lt. Wilkinson broke his hip in parachuting from an ailing Airacobra while trying to train as a fighter pilot after the outfit to which he was transferred got into combat overseas. He later returned to the United States and is probably through with flying for the time being. His injury was expected to keep him idle for quite some time. He feels that if he was going to be assigned to fighter work he should have had the same advantage of fighter training that all the other pursuit pilots had in the States.

6-24-44

PLENTY OF NERVE

Lt. Alexander, who has more nerve than a brass monkey, has used his initiative and his guts to get the best deal out of the "swindle." He went around the airports where he was stationed, made friends, and then talked these friends out of several hours flying time at the controls of the giant, two-motored Army transport called C-47 and which is known to commercial air passengers as the DC-3 transport.

The reader is probably familiar with the story of how "Alex" and Selden were sitting around the base operations office of what was then the biggest and busiest Allied airfield in Italy one day and the operations clerk had a call for C-47 pilots to carry a load of passengers and freight across the peninsula to another major airport.

THEY FLY TRANSPORT 6-24-44

He couldn't find any of the regular transport pilots around and he knew Alex and Selden had been "sweating out" some co-pilot time around base operation for a few weeks. He nonchalantly asked if "Alex" would fly the load and, just as nonchalantly, "Alex" said yes. Before the sergeant could change his mind, "Alex" had jumped in the cockpit of the transport and, with Selden as a co-pilot, took the big ship off, flew it across the peninsula with a load of officials and material, decided not to land because of the weather, flew the ship back to its home base and calmly landed.

6-24-44

The last chap, Lt. Lacy, was sent to North Africa for Thunderbolt training, was erroneously assigned to the 99th Squadron overseas, which flies Warhawks, and is now waiting for the paper work to be cleared up assigning him to one of the squadrons of the new group. Maybe eventually, he will be a fighter pilot if the Army ever makes up its mind.

99th Squadron Cited As Best In Italian Theater

Afro-American, Balto, Md.

5-13-44

By Lem Graves Jr.

Guide War Correspondent

(Copyright, Reproduction Forbidden)

ADVANCED ALLIED AIR BASE, Italy—(By Radio)—Major General Joseph Cannon, Mediterranean Allied Air Forces commander, has indicated to this reporter that the expected merger of the 99th Fighter Squadron with the larger Fighter Group would be postponed while the former continued on its present important assignments.

During a press conference on May 5 at advanced headquarters of the MAAF, Maj. General Cannon declared that the 99th Squadron was the battle hardened and one of the most experienced in giving close air support to ground troops in the entire theatre of operations.

5-13-44

MERGER DELAYED

He wants to keep them doing the difficult pinpoint divebombing, at which they are more adept than any of the P-40 squadrons remaining in the theatre, as long as possible before any change is made in their status.

This decision was reached because the great experience of the 99th's aviators is greatly needed in the present campaign in Italy.

REASONS GIVEN 5-13-44

While this may slightly delay the change over of the 99th, it is believed that its greatest contribution to Allied military progress in the area will be achieved by remaining on its present assignment, since it is qualified to hit minute objectives effectively.

Meanwhile, the famous squadron—which has 17 victories over German planes to its credit—continues its successful divebombing missions.

(It will be recalled that at the outset the 99th was "attached to" white fighter groups for operational purposes although in all other respects it went through its first six months overseas as a self-sustained tactical outfit.

(In Italy, however, it joined a famed fighter group, according to already published reports, to become one of four squadrons comprising that command. The personnel of the other three was all white.

(This arrangement resulted in almost complete "integration" of these pioneer Air Forces pilots, mechanics, and other ground crews, and was jealously regarded by them as a major step in the direction of improved race relations in the Army.

AN ADVANCE 5-13-44

(In a story in the April 15 issue marking the first anniversary of the 99th overseas, Guide War Correspondent Lem Graves Jr., declared that the most significant result of the "experiment" in the use of Negroes for combat by the Army Air Forces was the proof that the two races can live and fight side by side.

(This proof, he pointed out, coud be found in the arrangement by which the Negro squadron was integrated into the previously all-white group.

HAPPY ARRANGEMENT

(Graves also stated that the arrangement was a happy one for the white pilots and ground crews as well as for the colored. The men of the 99th, it has been revealed, are extremely proud of this accomplishment, and they want to go on pioneering in pleasant race relations rather than have their connection with the white squadrons severed. They therefore do not anticipate cheerfully the prospective merger of the 99th into the more recently arrived Negro fighter group.

5-13-44

(The 99th is now with the second fighter group of which it has been a part. It was separated recently from the first one when that group was given a new type of airplane. The 99th then joined a group commanded by Col. William K. McNown, white, with which it had operated a part of last summer during the pre-invasion bombing of Sicily.—Editor).

Pilot, Shot Down by Germans, Lives Two Days In Enemy Woods, Escapes

Back to 99th Base Safely

Call—Kansas City, Mo

Clarence Allen Of Alabama Has Harrowing Time

6-23-44

By ART CARTER
(War Correspondent in Italy)

ADVANCED AIR BASE, Italy. —(Cabled)—First Lt. Clarence W. Allen, 654 Walnut, Mobile, Ala., is back at a fighter squadron base safe and sound after being shot down by enemy ack-ack, escaping unhurt during a 10-minute machine gun barrage, eluding German sentries for two nights and finally crawling a mile on his hands and knees through underbrush in central Italy back to friendly territory.

The Beginning

The 25-year-old pilot's fascinating begins at midday on June 14 when his Warhawk was hit by enemy flak during a strafing mission on a roadway near the little town of San Lorenzo above Lake Bolsona. Allen, with three other flyers, had twice riddled a convoy of enemy trucks on the highway, destroying eight, when flak penetrated the plane's fuselage and gas tank. 6-23-44

"It felt like somebody had set off a firecracker under my seat," he emphasized.

The plane caught fire, smoke pouring from both sides.

The pilot flew until the cockpit became unbearably hot, then turned the plane over on its back and bailed out at 4,000 feet.

Lt. Leonard S. Jackson, Fort Worth, Texas, Allen's wingman who first radioed him that his plane was afire and covered his parachute descent, says, "It was the coolest jump I have seen."

Lt. William Noel Alsbrook, Kansas City, Kas., added, "It was a work of art."

Lt. Charles H. Tate, Pittsburgh, seconded the motion.

While floating down, Allen observed 20 mm. flak bursting around him until he was at 1,500 feet when it ceased. But he could not state whether the Germans were aiming at him or at the flight circling overhead for his protection.

Lt. Allen landed 50 yards from a German truck. He immediately threw away his flying equipment and beat it for the woods.

Stays Hidden 6-23-44

Germans reached the area a minute later and yelled for him to surrender, but when he stayed hidden, they raked his wooded hide-out with machine gun fire for 10 minutes during which time Allen lay flat on the ground as bullets whistled overhead.

"I was wet as a dishrag when they stopped firing and departed," he recalled. For the next two hours the pilot stayed hidden in the underbrush whenever he heard in the distance enemy voices. At dusk he crawled on his stomach for a while to the top of a hill where he discovered a path which he thought led to an Italian farm house. However, upon approaching the house he observed a German sentry walking toward him, and was forced to jump into the bushes. Apparently the German did not see him, but heard the noise of his movements.

"Stop!" he called.

With a comrade the two Germans searched the area, but failing to locate Allen, they returned to their posts.

At Daybreak

Allen then crept down the hill to the roadway, only to find more Germans. Thus trapped between enemy camps, he picked out a place to sleep and stayed all night, cold, wet and hungry. He was clad only in a summer flying suit, a one-piece gabardine garment, and had to wrap in the leaves and tree branches for protection from the chilly night air. His only food was a few chocolates and hard biscuits salvaged from the plane's safety kit. 6-23-44

All night German shells whined overhead and Allied artillery fire burst in the hills above him.

"I couldn't sleep a wink. It sounded like the whole town was crumbling to pieces," he said. At daybreak the pilot wormed his way to a small cave in the hillside where he crouched as four German machine gunners passed within five feet without detecting him.

"I looked right in their faces, but happily they didn't see me," he ejaculated.

Americans at Last

Several yards away was an enemy machine gun nest which blasted away at intervals between constant shellfire from the hills. At noon firing ceased and half an hour later, after one unroarious machine gun spray was directed at the Allied lines, all firing stopped.

"I shook in my boots," Allen said. But a few minutes later he saw Allied tanks advancing up the highway, an indication that the Germans were on the run. He realized they were American tanks, but was helpless and remained in his hideout until dark.

Again he crawled down the hill, easing his way through thorns on his hands and knees until he reached the bottom of the elevation where he discovered French troops bivouaced on the other side of the ravine. The pilot listened for ten minutes to the conversation between the troops to be sure of their nationality then walked out of the weeds and greeted them with the explanation that he was an American.

They welcomed him which was a signal for Allen to drop exhausted to the ground with comforting relief.

"I think my mother's prayers must have saved me," he declared after directing the French troops in the direction the Germans had fled. Eating his first meal in two days, Allen was led to an American division with which he spent the second night under shellfire before returning to his base in a tank supply truck the next day.

His 105th Mission

"Staying all night in the woods was not as bad as drifting through the flak-filled sky with bursts breaking all around. I was lucky," he concluded.

Pilots who had given him up as a prisoner of war went wild with glee when he walked into camp three days later, his clothes torn by briars and brambles and a slight bruise on his neck from his parachute strap as the only marks of his spine-tingling experience.

Allen, son of Dr. and Mrs. Clarence W. Allen, Mobile, was flying his 105th mission and is eligible for a return to the states which he looks forward to with eagerness. He was graduated by the air corps in March, 1943, and joined the 99th fighter squadron last October in Sicily where he flew his initial mission. He has a FW-190 to his credit, and wears the Air Medal. He attended Fisk university and West Virginia State college and is a member of Kappa Alpha Psi fraternity.

Allen's experience highlighted another week of intense armed reconnaissance flying for the P-40 Warhawk pilots who continued to wreck German convoys retreating into northern Italy, destroying more than 100 vehicles. Averaging six missions per day, the squadron ran its sortie total to 3,541 with 562 missions.

Lt. Alva Temple gained special recognition with 35 missions in 30 days. 1st Lt. Price D. Rice, Montclair, N. J., left for the states for reassignment this week.

10 New Flyers Reach Italy

Afro American
Baltimore, Md.

Two Collide, Jump Safely 9,000 Feet

CELEBRATE EASTER

Sermon Drowned by Roar of Planes

4-15-44

By ART CARTER

AFRO War Correspondent with U.S. Troops in Italy

[Copyright. Reproduction in whole or in part expressly forbidden.]

ADVANCED AIR BASE — (By Cable, Censored)—The arrival of ten new replacements enlivened activity around the 99th Fighter Squadron airdrome this week as newcomers renewed association with old friends, adjusted themselves to combat routine, and exchanged stories of aerial experiences with veterans.

The new pilots listened with awe-stricken expressions, as veterans recalled exciting details of combat missions, but the script was reversed for a brief period as 2nd Lts. James B. Brown of Los Angeles and Edward M. Thomas of Chicago, revealed their 9,000-foot jumps in North Africa during a three-week training routine which preceded their trip to the 99th base. The two were involved in a mid-air collision when forced to parachute. Both landed unharmed, and like other replacements, eagerly await opportunity for combat missions.

Other New Pilots

Other new pilots are 2nd Lts. Theodore H. Mills, New Rochelle, N.Y.; Floyd Thompson, London, W.Va.; Charles W. Tate, 1004 Decatur Avenue, Pittsburgh; Clarence W. Dart, Elmira, N.Y.; Theodore A. Wilson, 47 Patton Avenue, Roanoke, Va.; Neal V. Nelson, 6017 Indiana Avenue, Chicago, Woodrow F. Morgan, Omaha, Nebr., and William N. Albrook, Kansas City, Kans. 4-15-44

The addition of new pilots was a welcoming event, as many veterans, including the commanding officer, Major George S. Roberts, have passed or are near their allotted combat mission total, and look forward to 30-day furloughs in the States or reassignment in the States. 4-15-44

Easter in Italy

Easter Sunday marked a milestone in the squadron's history, as it was the second year overseas for tired, seasoned members of the ground crew and charter pilots. They took the day in stride, continuing the dangerous, unglamorous work of divebombing enemy gun positions, supply transports and handling one target opportunity assignment during which they strafed German railroad cars in the vicinity of Rome.

Soldiers throughout this theatre celebrated Easter with traditional church services. They were conducted in theatres, tents and improvised amphitheatres by chaplains of all denominations.

Airdrome services were marked by the grim atmosphere of war, as we stood bareheaded singing hymns or sat on discarded oil drums while hearing the Easter message.

The chaplain's words were drowned out intermittently by the roar of planes overhead, moving toward enemy territory on missions of destruction. 4-16-44

Ready for Spring Offense

A recent 200-mile tour along the peninsula, behind the lines and up to the Cassino battle area, revealed our troops ready, willing and anxious for full participation in the spring offense. Their precise task, that of supplying front-line troops with every need, lacks drama put excitement is present around the air units. The men do their job wonderfully well. Morale is fairly high, though pricked here and there by restrictions to camp areas, which prevent men from getting desired recreation, liquor stimulation and female companionship.

Among the recent newcomers to Italy are T/4 Oneal Brunson, New Brunswick, N.J.; Pvt. Jerome Bowser, 166 Key Street, Portsmouth, Va.; Pfc. John H. Echols, Birmingham; T/4 John H. Bogan, 2315 East 559t5h Street; T/5 William J. Walker, 2328 East 101 Street, both of Cleveland, and members of a signal construction (aviation) battalion. 4-13-44

Promotions announced in the fighter group by Lt. Col. Benjamin O. Davis include Captains Vance H. Marshbanks, Jr., of Los Angeles, group flight surgeon, and Nelson Brooks of Chicago, executive officer, to majors; 1st. Lt. Lee Rayford, squadron commander, of Washington, to captain.

47a-1944

99th

Pilots Of 99th Squadron Praise Worth Of Comrades; Plead For Equal Opportunities

Age — New York, N.Y.
7-8-44

Saturday morning at a press conference arranged by the Army Public Relations of the War Department, 90 Church street, Capts. Lemuel R. Custis and Charles B. Hall, members of the famous 99th Pursuit Squadron, which has been engaged in aerial combat missions in the Mediterranean area since 1943, asserted that Negro pilots have advanced considerably beyond the experimental stage.

The pilots who have just returned from successful encounters with the enemy at North Africa, Sicily, and Anzio Beachhead in Italy, expressed a keen interest in the post-war opportunities for Negroes. Capt. Hall remarked, "Some of us are interested in military aviation, and others in commercial, but we all want as broad a span of possibilities as we can get." 7-8-44

Capt. Hall who won the Distinguished Flying Cross and Capt. Custis are credited with having damaged four of the seventeen enemy planes destroyed by their squadron.

When questioned as to how their spectacular work was being regarded by other squadrons, he replied "A fifty caliber machine gun or a 20-mm. cannon was a very forceful denominator." 7-8-44

Walter White, secretary of the NAACP was present and praised the record of the fighters and the work being achieved by the other three Negro squadrons now fighting in Italy.

99th's Pet Plane Transferred; Had Completed 234 Combat Missions

Afro American — Baltimore, Md.

By ART CARTER
AFRO War Correspondent with U.S. Troops in Italy
[Copyright. Reproduction in whole or in part expressly forbidden.]
7-15-44

ADVANCED AIR BASE IN ITALY (By Air Mail) — Just before sundown, the red-nosed P-40 Warhawk circled her Italian airbase and slipped in to a smooth landing on the dusty runway.

S/Sgt. William C. Hall, a serious-minded, moustachioed, cigar-smoking Philadelphian, heaved an eloquent sigh of relief, rubbed his grease-stained hands together, sauntered over to his tool kit and prepared to go to work.

Plane Made History

The ship, Knobby II, now rolling slowly up to the dispersal station had just made history. She was back from her 234th combat mission with 340 operational hours to her credit, and this was the last time Sergeant Hall would check her mechanism for flight.

Within another twenty-four hours she was ferried to another field, for use by another squadron. Sergeant Hall, her crew chief, regretfully mused, "She was a rugged old ship. I hate to lose her." 7-15-44

With 99th 14 Months

Sergeant Hall, 26-year-old former civilian pilot, of 8533 Erwig Avenue, Philadelphia, and Sgt. David B. Charman, 2305 Catherine Street, Philadelphia, her armament chief, had worked on Knobby II since her assignment to the 99th Fighter Squadron. That was fourteen months ago back at Ouedn-Ja in North Africa where the squadron first went into combat.

The ship, which carried the battle number A-30, gained its name, Knobby II, after its crew chief, Hall, who won the monicker at Tuskegee when he first joined the squadron because of the way he smoked his short cigars, a manner closely akin to the Joe Palooka character of the same name. 7-15-44

Favorite of Capt. Hall

On its left fuselage, the ship carried a second name, Maxine, in honor of Capt. Charles B. Hall's wife. Captain Hall flew Knobby II, as I shall refer to her herein, on her first mission over Pantelleria.

He regarded her as his ship and flew her on virtually all of his missions, using her six 50-calibre wing guns to shoot down two Focke-Wulf 190's and one ME 109 which won for him the Distinguished Flying Cross before he left for rehabilitation in the States.

In Class by Herself

Fighter planes as a rule are out of service and usually in salvage with their parts being utilized in other ships after 100 or 150 combat hours, but Knobby II has withstood all the rigors of the long grind of warfare from North Africa, through Sicily and up the Italian peninsula. She stands alone as the fighter squadron's durable duchess. 7-15-44

Besides Captain Hall, who piloted her first mission, and Capt. Leon C. Roberts, who piloted her last combat mission here, she has been handled by practically all of the squadron's flyers.

In addition, six white flyers flew her during the period last January when the pioneer squadron was flying intermingled flights with white squadrons of its group.

She has a long record of hair-raising escapes, yet her record is one of good luck and continuous efficiency. She has lugged fifty-six airmen to battle, but none has acquired the purple heart.

During her flak-dodging career, she has acquired some nicks in all propellor blades, innumerable hits in the fuselage, wings and empennage, but seldom any damage that Sergeant Hall and his fellow mechanics could not repair within a few hours. 7-15-44

Many Narrow Escapes

One time when Capt. Herbert E. (Herky) Carter was flying her, he returned with part of the horizontal stabilizer shot away, but she brought him home safely.

Captain Hall once returned with several large holes right up under the cockpit's belly — only a short distance from the wing gas tank. Yet, luckily none of the shells pierced the metal though there were many rips.

Knobby II was severely damaged on a dive-bombing mission with Lt. Elwood Driver at the controls. She returned from this mission with a flak hole in the right wing large enough for a man to slip through, yet Driver was able to wing his way safely home in formation.

This was the only time she was out of the squadron's hands, as she had to go over to a service group for repairs.

Carried All Types of Bombs

Everything on the ship is original, from prop to stern, except the horizontal stabilizer and windshield. 7-15-44

The latter had to be changed when Lt. Willie Fuller flew her through the volcanic dust during the eruption of Mount Vesuvius, leaving the shield pock-marked by the heavy dust paticles.

There have been only three engine changes in her, and Sgt. Dave Charman says she has carried every kind of bomb from 20-pound fragmentations to 1000-pound explosives.

Hall Ex-Civilian Pilot

Sergeant Hall treated her like she was his own. After two years at Temple University, he studied at the Philadelphia School of Aviation and acquired 300 hours as a civilian pilot before joining the army as a volunteer. At 15, he was riding motorcycles and three years later competing in cycle races along the East coast.

When he joined the army, he was assigned to the chemical warfare branch. Later, he tried to join the Royal Canadian Air Force, but the army would not release him, and so when aviation opened at Tuskegee he transferred to the U.S. Air Corps. 7-15-44

Squadron's Pet Plane

He wanted to be a cadet, but never was able to obtain a transfer from the ground crew, so he stuck it out. Knobby II is not only a "good old ship" to him but a legend.

No one picked any soft spots for her. Her missions lasted from thirty minutes to three hours, and she was the "pet" plane of the squadron.

All of the squadron's ground crew, as well as its pilots, hated to see Knobby II or Maxine, if you prefer, go.

The ground crew, headed by M/Sgt. Alexander Crawford, and the armorers, led by M/Sgt. Fred Archer, are especially proud, because her success is a tribute to the efficiency of the unit's ground force. 7-15-44

They say, "Nothing will stop Knobby II."

Extra!

meet to bring the young fighte group overseas during January

Court-Martialed

Afro American
Baltimore, Md.

7-29-44

CAPT. CHARLES W. DRYDEN, of Bronx, N.Y., former 99th Fighter Squadron pilot, who has faced court-martial and been acquitted since his return to this country after six months overseas. The decision of the court exonerating him is up for review. He was charged with low flying.

99th Joins Fighter Group

Afro American
All Our Pilots Now
Baltimore, Md.
Under Col. Davis

GET NEW PLANES

Combined Group Hits Far into Europe

7-15-44

By MAX JOHNSON
AFRO War Correspondent with U.S. Troops in Italy
[Copyright. Reproduction in whole or in part expressly forbidden.]

ADVANCED AIR BASE IN ITALY—(By Cable, Censored)—The pioneer 99th Fighter Squadron on Wednesday joined the fighter group commanded by Col. Benjamin O. Davis, operating with the 15th Allied Air Force from an advanced air base on the Adriatic side of Italy.

The 99th, which previously operated with the 12th Allied Air Force on the West Coast of this peninsula, flying P-40 Warhawks, will get the new type fighter planes, P-51 Mustangs, which are rated here as Uncle Sam's best and are already being used by the other squadrons in Col. Davis's group, which formerly used P-47 Thunderbolts.

army's fighter planes except the P-38 Lightning, having previously used P-39 Airacobras.

Big Things Expected 7-15-44

Union of the pioneer squadron with those of Col. Davis's group is expected to make this fighter pilot group tops in this area. Such a union was scheduled on several previous occasions, but 12th AAF officials were reluctant to let the 99th pilots go because of their outstanding work.

They have now flown all of the

Infantryman Tells How 99th Fighter Squadron Knocked Out 3 Enemy Tanks

Call—Kansas City, Mo.
4-14-44

WASHINGTON, D. C. — An infantryman, back in this country under the Army's rotation plan after 18 months' service overseas, related to officials of the War Department how the 99th Fighter Squadron swooped down through a hail of heavy flak and knocked out three enemy tanks on the Allied Fifth Army front in Italy.

Sergeant William H. Snider, 27, of Baldwin, Md., a platoon sergeant in the Third Infantry division, told the story. He took part in the invasion of North Africa and Sicily, fought in Tunisia and close to Cassino, and was recently in action at the Anzio beachhead 4-14-44

The returned doughboy went through months of combat without being wounded, though he spent 21 days in a hospital with sprains of the ankle and hip after an artillery shell landed eight feet from him at Mount Rotondo, Italy.

Sergeant Snider said that the infantry and air corps were working as a close-knit team in the Italian campaign.

"We were helped a lot by the 99th Fighter Squadron," he added. "Those colored fighters were the wildest fellows I've ever seen. It didn't make any difference what you wanted—if you asked them, they'd deliver."

Once, Sergeant Snider reported, his outfit was held up during an advance by three enemy tanks, and called for help from the Negro fliers.

"We were pinned down and couldn't even raise our heels, he said. "Then the planes came along. They swooped down to 300 feet, right through lots of heavy flak, and knocked those three tanks out." 4-14-44

Sergeant Snider will be reassigned at the conclusion of his furlough period.

99th Observes Year Overseas

Afro American
Baltimore, Md.

By ART CARTER

AFRO War Correspondent with U.S. Troops in Italy

[Copyright. Reproduction in whole or in part expressly forbidden.]

4-29-44

ADVANCED AIR BASE, Italy. —By Air Mail, Delayed).—The 99th Fighter Squadron, which landed with its twenty-eight pilots and their ground crews at Casablanca, April 24, 1943, celebrated its first year overseas this week.

As a fighter squadron, it has been through the toughest, most perilous and thankless job of air warfare, but it has taken it in stride, smashing along, giving close support to ground forces and has switched groups four times in a single year.

They have lived in the dirt-crust vilages of Africa, the flies and filth of Sicily, the mud and mountains of Italy and from a green, inexperienced, uncertain group of flyers they have developed into a smooth-working, first-class unit that knows its job and does it. 4-29-44

Entering Second Year

As the squadron enters its fifty-second week of overseas duty, it has over 400 missions to its credit.

In addition, the squadron has dropped close to 400 tons of bombs on enemy targets, including gun positions, motor transports, factories and marshaling yards. The bombs have included every type from 1,000-pounders to fragmentation bombs.

17 Nazi Planes Destroyed

The box score reads: seventeen Nazi planes destroyed; six probably destroyed, and six damaged. Captain Hall leads the parade with three Nazi victories, two Focke-Wolke 190's and one ME-109, while Second Lieut. Wilson V. Eagleston and Frist Lieut. Robert W. Deiz are next in line with two each.

Capt. Leon C. Roberts, Pritchard, Ala., is near the 100-sortie mark and virtually all of the pioneer squadron's charter pilots now have upward of eighty missions, with the earliest replacements hovering around the sixty-mark. 4-29-44

2 Pilots Get Purple Heart

Many of their planes have come home sieved and holed with enemy flak; others have returned blood-stained, and two pilots have earned the Purple Heart.

One of its pilots, Second Lieut. William E. Griffin, shot down January 15, is a prisoner of war; three others are missing in action and five have paid the supreme sacrifice of war—death.

In all, the squadron's work, from any standpoint, has been outstanding.

Its first overseas commanding officer, Lieut. Col. Benjamin O. Davis, is now commanding a new fighter group, also operating in Italy, and its more recent commanding officer, Major George S. Roberts, under whose guidance the squadron achieved its beachhead victories, is now en route home for a rest period.

Clevelander Now at Helm

The squadron is now in command of Capt. Erwin B. Lawrence, Cleveland, Ohio. 4-29-44

Lawrence, formerly assistant operations officer, at 24, is the squadron's youngest leader, but he will reach his twenty-fifth birthday come May 31—which gives him only a few days on Major Roberts who assumed command last September 2 at 25.

Fliers Hit Artillery Delaying Advance At Anzio Beachhead

Journal & Guide—Norfolk, Va.

Set Fire To Fuel And Ammunition Dumps After Using Incendiaries First Time; Flak Wounds Pilot

3-18-44

By Lem Graves Jr.
Guide War Correspondent
(Copyright. Reproduction Forbidden.)

ADVANCED ALLIED AIR BASE, Italy—(By Cable)—The flying warriors of the 99th Fighter Squadron are moving closer to Rome, key city in the Germans' delaying campaign in Italy, in carrying out their bombing missions. Their last flight on Monday was the squadron's first for delivery of incendiary bombs. The targets were fuel and ammunition dumps just south of Rome.

The incendiaries hit in the target area and many fires were seen. As the plucky pilots pulled out of their bomb runs they found themselves streaking over the their P-40 Warhawk fighter-suburbs of Rome, with a clear bombers, right on the nose. And view of the city. they were happy at having this first clear shot at a target in several days.

WEATHER BETTER

The last few days of operations for the 99th have been their most successful in recent weeks because the weather, which has made aerial operations difficult, lifted so that targets could be reached and bomb runs made with good visibility.

GRAVES

However, these Negro pilots don't kid themselves about their successes. They are brutally frank, whether they miss or hit the targets. 3-18-44

There was a noticeable change in squadron reaction last Friday when flights returned from bombing big gun emplacements within range of Allied troops on the hard-held beachhead south of Rome.

DID THEIR JOB

The men knew that they had placed their bombs, delivered by

The fliers hate rain and clouds which obscure the Nazi forces and military installations. They prefer clear sailing with ample time to make a clean approach.

PLANE HIT BY FLAK

Such approaches marked their Saturday and Monday sorties against gun installations similar to those they hit Friday. These artillery units had prevented the Allies from advancing on the crucial south-of-Rome beachhead. 3-18-44

Recently anti-aircraft flak ripped all of the controls out of the plane flown by 2nd Lt. Albert H. Manning of Hartsville, S. C. He escaped injury, however, and brought his plane back to the field. Manning was surprised when he prepared to come down to learn then that his hydraulic landing gear was shot out.

It was then too late to do anything but make a belly landing He naturally plowed up the run way and damaged his ship, bu he didn't get a scratch.

LUCKY HAMILTON

Another plane recently hit by flak was that flown by 2nd Lt. John S. Hamilton of Los Angeles, Calif. On Friday an enemy missle passed through his cockpit and pierced his leg.

Although injured painfully, Hamilton brought his precious plane in from the beachhead area and made a safe landing. He is now nearly recovered.

THREE EMERGENCY LANDINGS

The gun emplacement dive bombings have brought to three the number of beachhead emergency landings made by Lt. Heber C. Houston during recent action. (See special story on Houston on page 9) 3-18-44

This time Houston brought his shot up ship down on a landing strip and while there asked permission to fly another repaired plane, left previously by a 99th pilot, back to his own field.

Court-Martialed

Afro American
Baltimore, Md.

7-29-44

CAPT. CHARLES W. DRYDEN, of Bronx, N.Y., former 99th Fighter Squadron pilot, who has faced court-martial and been acquitted since his return to this country after six months overseas. The decision of the court exonerating him is up for review. He was charged with low flying.

2 99th Officers Study Decoding

Afro American 5-13-44
Baltimore, Md.

By MAX JOHNSON

AFRO War Correspondent with U.S. Troops in North Africa

[Copyright. Reproduction in whole or in part expressly forbidden.]

5-13-44

NORTH AFRICA — Two pilots under the command of Lieutenant Col. Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., arrived in this area May 8 to begin special training at the Military Code and Cipher School.

First Lt. Robert L. King, Broone Street, Newark, N.J., and Second Lt. Samuel L. Fuller, Norwood Street, Norfolk, Va., are the first officers of their group selected for this highly specialized training.

Lieutenants King and Fuller have been in Italy since January, when their fighter group arrived after training at Selfridge Field, Mich.

Four-Week Course

After an intensified four-week course in cryptographs, during which they will learn to decode and decipher all kinds of codes, they will be given War Department certificates permitting them to handle any secret codes.

47a-1944

99th

99th Releases 2 Pilots, Gets Ordnance Officer

Afro American — Baltimore, Md.
5-6-44

Capt. Rogers and Lt. Knighten Returned to States for Rest; 10 Promoted; 4 Cited

By ART CARTER
AFRO War Correspondent with U.S. Troops in Italy

[Copyright. Reproduction in whole or in part expressly forbidden.]

ADVANCED AIR BASE IN ITALY — Two more charter pilots of the 99th Fighter Squadron, Capt. John W. Rogers of Chicago, with 95 missions, and First Lieut. James B. Knighten, Tulsa, Okla., with 81 missions, left for the States on rest assignments, while First Lieut. Lafayette Johnson of Chicago joined the squadron on transfer as ordnance officer.

Ten enlisted men were promoted recently. They were: Clovis A. Bordeaux of St. Louis, to master sergeant; John Chase, Yonkers, N.Y., and Herbert H. Nichols, Masontown, Pa., to technical sergeants; Charles M. Butler, Brooklyn, N.Y., and Eric A. Ballen, 465 W. 152nd Street, NYC, to staff sergeants; Caesar Carruth, Jackson, Miss., Julio R. Bautista, 88 E. 111th Street, NYC, and Jack Burnham, Jr., Vicksburg, Miss., to corporals.

5-6-44

The fighter group, commanded by Lt. Col. Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., maintained its daily routine air protection for convays and harbors along the Western Coast of Italy, sending its sorties to 3,550 missions to 270 as of April 28.

Four Cited in Rescue

Edward Edgehill of Brooklyn, N.Y., group engineering officer, was promoted from junior to senior grade warrant officer. At the same time four pilots received commendation for a "swell job" done in aiding the rescue of a bomber crew from the sea recently.

The four honored pilots, members of the squadron commanded by First Lieut. Melvin T. Jackson, included: First Lieut. Charles McGee of Champaign, Ill.; Second Lieuts. Felix I. Kirkpatrick, Chicago; Freddie E. Hutchins, Thomasville, Ga., and Rogero Romine, Los Angeles.

5-6-44

While on patrol duty, Lieuts. Romine and McGee, noting men in the water, informed the controller of the location. Circling over the distressed crew until aid arrived, they turned the job over to Lieutenants Kirkpatrick and Hutchins who gave air cover until the sea rescue was completed.

AVIATION UNIT PRAISED

GRENIER FIELD, N.H.— Capt.

J. P. McBryde has expressed complete confidence in the aviation squadron he commands here.

99th Hero Back in U.S. On Delayed Honeymoon

Courier — Pittsburgh, Pa.
4-22-44

TUSKEGEE ARMY AIR FIELD, Ala.—1st Lt. Allen G. Lane, with 65 combat missions tucked neatly under his belt, returned here last week for a brief visit before leaving with his charming wife, the former Miss Rose Williams, of Tuskegee institute, Ala., on a delayed honeymoon.

Another Hero Of 99th Back

Journal + Guide — Norfolk, Va.
4-22-44

TUSKEGEE, Ala.—First Lt. Allen G. Lane, with 65 combat missions tucked neatly under his belt, returned to the Tuskegee Army Air Field last week for a brief visit. With his charming Mark Clark's plane on his visit wife, the for-fo the battlefronts.

LANE

mer Miss Rose Lt. Knighten is 24 years old Williams of and is married to the former Miss Tuskegee Institute, he Luana Robinson of Wichita, Kan. He graduated from Dillard University and was about to begin then left to the study of law when his appointment to the Air Corps took resume their honeymoon him to Tuskegee in 1941. Before cut short by the departure returning to Italy he and his wife for overseas will visit her family in Wichita. service last Capt. Rogers, familiarly known year of the by his officer friends in the 99th famous 99th Fighter Squadron, as "Neuro Willie," graduated from Returned to the United States Chicago Teachers College with a under the rotation system for AAF B. S. degree in 1941, and was a pilots with combat experience, Lt. civilian pilot before joining the Lane, after 10 months combat Army. He had a total of 90 comduty overseas, earned a 20-day bat missions at the last published leave before reporting to the AAF count before he was granted redistribution center in Atlantic leave. City, N. J., for reassignment.

A native of Demopolis, Ala., the modest, 160 pound P-40 Warhawk pilot, who left the U. S. with the original group of pilots comprising the 99th Fighter Squadron, had very little to say about his aerial exploits. The veteran airman of the North African, Sicilian and Italian campaigns, mentioned poker as running "neck-and-neck" with movies as recreation for the members of the crack all-Negro flying organization.

2 More Pilots Of 99th Back

Journal + Guide
Norfolk, Va. 6-3-44

In The States

Special to Journal and Guide

OBERLIN, Ohio—Two more of the original 99th Fighter Squadron pilots are back in the United States on 30-day leaves, it became known here this week when 1st Lt. James Bernard Knighten Jr., visited his mother, Mrs. Julia Knighten, 171 E. Lorain street.

The other flier home for a rest before returning to the war in Italy is Capt. John W. Rogers, Chicago, who is spending some time visiting relatives and friends in the Windy City. Both are veterans of the air campaigns in Africa, Sicily, and Italy and have been decorated with the Air Medal with two Oak Leaf clusters.

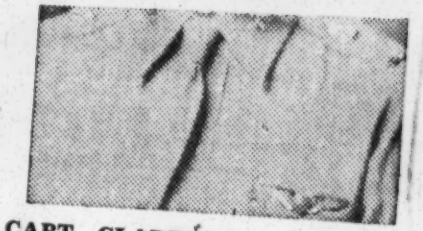
Knighten is known far and wide as "The Eel," and his humorous antics, breaking the strain of a deadly war, have been written about on numerous occasions by Guide war correspondents with the 99th. He is a native of Tulsa, Okla.

6-3-44

Thirteen months in the fighting zones and 81 combat sorties are a part of his brilliant flying record. He was also one of the six pilots who recently furnished fighter escort for Lt. General

99TH PILOT IS BACK IN U. S.

Defender — Chicago, Ill.
4-22-44



CAPT. CLARENCE C. JAMISON

Capt. Clarence C. Jamison, 26, 9328 Prairie avenue, recently returned from action in the European theatre of war during which time he saw action over the Anzio beachhead and Pantelleria. He went overseas with Lt. Col. B. O. Davis Jr., then commanding the 99th Pursuit Squadron in April 1943.

The unit is now commanded by Maj. G. S. Roberts. Capt. Jamison was born in Little Rock, Ark., and came to Chicago in 1937 after spending several years in Cleveland, Ohio. He studied at the University of Chicago where he met his present wife, Phillis Piersawl Jamison. She was a student in mathematics and he studied bacteriology.

He was one of the first three pilots to join the famous 99th fighter group in May, 1942. Upon landing overseas he was given charge of a flight of P-40 Warhawks. The real action came over the Anzio beachhead when the 99th dive-bombed and machine-gunned the Germans and Italians which action led to the fall of Pantelleria.

4-22-44

In relating some of his experience while flying combat patrol duty Capt. Jamison said, "I had a flight of P-40 Warhawks and was doing patrol duty over the Anzio beachhead protecting ground installation and American ops that had moved in after Pantelleria fell."

"Suddenly we saw a German fighter group of Messerschmidts coming in for a raid on the island. We intercepted them and during a dog-fight that ensued we shot down five of their planes before they returned and headed back to their base."

4-22-44

Upon returning to America Capt. Jamison, nephew of Capt. Clarence E. Jamison of the army medical corp stationed in Ft. Huachuca, Ariz., got the first glimpse of his 1' months old son, Michal who was born shortly after he landed overseas. Capt. Jamison also has a brother on active duty. He is Capt. Thurston E. Jamison of the inf

Former 99th Flight Leader Talks To Class

Journal + Guide
Norfolk, Va.

Pilots Graduate

At Tuskegee Army Air Field

6-3-44

By ART CARTER

TUSKEGEE ARMY AIR FIELD, Ala.—Captain Clarence C. Jamison, former 99th Fighter Squadron flight leader, spoke briefly of his combat experiences in the North African and Italian campaigns to the latest graduating class of pilots at the Tuskegee Army Air Field, Tuesday morning, May 23, in the post chapel.

Recently assigned to TAAF as a transition instructor for single engine pilots, the 26 year Cleveland, Ohio, flyer recounted some colorful experiences that he and the other members of the crack all-Negro fighter outfit underwent while overseas.

GRADUATES FROM OVER TWENTY STATES

Among the graduates of this class, which included representatives from over twenty states were 1st Lt. Wendell M. Lucas, Fairmount Heights, Md.; 2nd Lt. George E. Cisco, Alton, Ill.; and 2nd Lt. Kenneth M. Wright of Sheridan, Wyo.; 2nd Lts. Richard H. Bell, Chicago, Ill.; Leonelle A. Bonam, Pascagoula, Miss.; Harold H. Brown, Minneapolis, Minn.; Harry J. Davenport Jr., Beaumont, Texas; John W. Davis, Kansas City, Kansas; Louis K. Harris, St. Louis, Mo.

6-3-44

2nd Lts. George K. Hayes, Los Angeles, Calif.; Aaron Herrington, Raleigh, N. C.; Earl B. Highbaugh, Indianapolis, Ind.; Wendell W. Hockaday, Norfolk, Va.; George J. Iles, Quincy, Ill.; Jimmy Lanham, Philadelphia, Pa.; Clarence A. Oliphant, Council Bluffs, Iowa; Ralph Orduna, Omaha, Nebr.; Leroy Roberts Jr., Toccoa, Ga.; William C. Walker Jr., Atlantic City, N. J.; Samuel W. Watts, New York, N. Y.; Robert W. Williams, Ottumwa, Iowa, and Bertram W. Wilson Jr. of Brooklyn, N. Y.

FLIGHT OFFICERS

Others completing the AAF Training Command course of instruction for single engine pilots at the Tuskegee Army Air Field and receiving appointments as flight officers were Charles V. Brantley, St. Louis, Mo.; Joseph E. Chinworth, Memphis, Tenn.; Samuel J. Foreman, Tulsa, Okla.; Thomas W. Jefferson, Glen Rock, N. J.; Robert A. Pillow Jr., Chicago, Ill.; James C. Ramsey, Augusta, Ga.; Arnett W. Sparks Jr., Los Angeles, Calif., and Hiram Wright of Los Angeles, Calif.

NO BOMBER PILOTS

6-3-44

Because of a recent change in training policy lengthening the period of time necessary for the completion of twin engine pilot

15TH AAF BASE IN ITALY.— Captains Howard L. Braugh, 24, of Petersburg, Va., and Edward L. Toppins, 29, of San Francisco, both of the 99th fighter squadron, were awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross Friday. Both are in the states for reassignment. As flight commanders, both have been spearheads

Flying Cross To Two More Pilots

Call — Kansas City, Kan.
6-3-44

STUDENT HONORS

6-3-44

Featured on the graduation were For excellent all-around ability Phillip Medley of Boston, and leadership, student honors

during over 130 missions of all kinds but they were particularly outstanding in strafing and dive-bombing attacks.

In the southern France invasion, they flew lead spots in flights which helped wreck enemy coastal installations as a softening-up process for invasion forces. 11-3-44

Baugh led the flight during the squadron's previous dive-bombing days which destroyed 25 German trucks. Toppins has been consistently outstanding in aerial maneuvers throughout his combat tour of duty.

Toppins has four planes to his credit, narrowly missing ace status when a fifth plane was officially declared "probable" instead of "destroyed aircraft." Baugh has one enemy plane to his credit.

1st Lt. Charles P. Bailey of Puntagorda, Ga., Herman "Ace" Lawson of Marysville, Calif., and John J. Suggs of Detroit are the latest three pilots to get reassignment to the states while five were promoted to first lieutenants. They are Quitman C. Walker of Indianola, Miss., Shelley Westbrook of Toledo, Richard D. Harder of Birmingham, Roger B. Gaitor of Seaside Heights, N. J., and Robert C. Chandler of Allegan, Mich. 11-3-44

In the service group which services the Mustang group planes, four promotions were made recently. Captain Elmer D. Jones of Washington, commanding officer of the service squadron, was elevated to major while James B. Ray of Bardstown, Ky., commander of the signal squadron; Thomas G. Weaver of Baton Rouge, commander of the quartermaster company and Walter Alexander of St. Louis of the quartermaster unit, were all promoted to captains.

Pilots Silence German Guns

Afro American
Baltimore, Md.

99th Squadron Flies 300 Sorties in Week

ANNIVERSARY NEAR

Second Member on Way Home for Rest

3-18-44

By ART CARTER

AFRO War Correspondent with U.S. Troops in Italy

[Copyright. Reproduction in whole or in part expressly forbidden.]

ADVANCED AIR BASE IN ITALY (By Cable, Censored)—Soaring far into enemy territory, pilots of the 99th Fighter Squadron continued to support Allied beachhead forces by hammering German gun positions and supply dumps in the Rome suburban area this week in dive bombing missions.

Carrying high explosive bombs, the P-40 Warhawk pilots scored four direct hits against enemy guns that have been attacking the Anzio troops. The flyers also put many bombs in the target area and reported guns silenced in Friday's operation. 3-18-44

Seek Anniversary Record

Notwithstanding two days of unfavorable weather, they flew over 100 sorties during the week and are aiming for the 3,000 mark for the squadron before its first anniversary overseas next month.

All pilots returned safely, but the operations were not without incident, as Lt. Herbert Houston made his third forced landing on the Anzio beachhead after enemy flak damaged his plane's cooling system. He obtained another plane and returned to his base the same day. 3-18-44

Lt. John Hamilton's ship also received flak hits, but he was able to reach the base.

2nd Pilot Released

First Lt. Allen G. Lane of Demopolis, Ala., the second 99th pilot to get his release, left for the States Sunday, following Capt. Clarence Jamison's departure.

Capt. Bernard S. Proctor of Philadelphia, the squadron's adjutant, is attending chemical warfare school.

Gets Eggs and Cakes

Joy ran through the squadron this week as fresh eggs were placed on the chow menu for the first time in many months. Coca-Colas were also added to the ration list, marking the first time cokes have been available since July 2, when Capt. Chas. B. Hall earned one bottle for his initial Nazi victory.

Spring is in the air and "sunny Italian weather" the men read so much about before reaching this peninsular may yet show itself after weeks of intermittent rains, hail storms and thirty-degree temperature.

Major Battles Expected

Spring also is indicative of big things to come, as trucks roll day and night, moving supplies to forward areas. The feeling is that it won't be long before the Allies strike heavily on different fronts, with our troops playing a major role. 3-18-44

Sidney Williams and Geraldine Dyson, welfare workers, formerly at Casablanca, are also now in Italy, helping to provide entertainment for the men. Sarah Johnson of Boston and Roger Gordon of Philadelphia, also welfare workers, arrived recently.

Air General Pays Tribute To 99th On Anniversary

Defender—Chicago, Ill.

TUSKEGEE, Ala. — (ANP) — Thousands of Army Air Force cadets here last week heard Maj. Gen. Butler pay tribute to the men of the 99th Pursuit Squadron. Maj. Gen. Butler delivered his address over a nation-wide radio hookup Wednesday in commemoration of the third anniversary of Tuskegee Army Air Field. 8-12-44

"The 99th Pursuit Squadron's battle in the skies over Europe, like your battle here to strengthen the fighting forces now may be listed as a creditable chapter in the history of the air forces," said Maj. Gen. Butler, who represented Gen. H. H. Arnold, head of the Army air forces.

"Three years ago," he continued, "this air base, the first in history to train Negro pilots, was a huddle of tents. The landing field was a marshland. Men and bulldozers pushed hills into swamps in order to ready this field for the arrival of its first 500 troops by the fall of 1941. When the first runway strips were ready, the original class of 15 Negro students filed in and began the task of learning to fly the Army way.

"Much depended on all these men," he went on. "The eyes of the nation ewre focused on Tuskegee, for here for the first time, Negro aviation cadets were being groomed to fly war planes of a unit which was then a unit thought only — the 99th Pursuit Squadron."

Maj. Gen Butler congratulated men of the Tuskegee training field on their spirit of unity. "One can not stand here and see the large installation which is Tuskegee Army Air Field today; one cannot consider the record of the 99th Pursuit Squadron conceived, manned and whetted into fighting shape at this air base, without sharing with you a justifiable sense of accomplishment," he remarked. 8-12-44

"All these accomplishments have been made possible through the unsurpassed spirit and unity of effort which is outstanding among the personnel of this post as it is for this constructive spirit of cooperation as well as for its resulting achievements."

The half-hour broadcast, which reviewed the history and the operation of the air field, also featured a talk by Tuskegee's commanding officer, Col. Noel F. Parrish; interviews with Capt. Clarence Jamison, returned veteran of the 99th Pursuit Squadron, and with typical cadet, civilian employe and line chief.

The radio program was only the highlight of the all-day anniversary celebration. Visiting bands from Ft. Benning and from Maxwell and Gunter fields gave concerts throughout the day. Other special events were a track meet, an art exhibit, display of military equipment, and military review.

Two Germans Killed To Each 99th Pilot Lost

Journal + Guide
Norfolk, Va.
6-10-44

Squadron's Second Leader Back; Was Hit 73 Times

By LOUIS R. LAUTIER
Special to Journal and Guide

WASHINGTON, D. C. — Major George Spencer Roberts, 25-year-old commander of the 99th Fighter Squadron, disclosed at a press conference at the War Department's Pentagon Building last weekend that his unit has flown 3,000 sorties in the North African and Mediterranean theatres and has shot down 17 German planes.

Against this score he listed of his unit three aircraft missing after combat, three pilots missing in action, two killed in combat, and one reported as a prisoner of war after combat action. These figures, he said Thursday, covered the period from June 2, 1943, the date the squadron was committed to combat, to April 11, when Major Roberts left Italy.

PLANE HIT 73 TIMES

Major Roberts himself has flown 73 sorties and has approximately 100 hours of operational combat flying to his credit. His plane has been hit by enemy bullets 73 times. He is back in the United States on temporary duty for a well earned rest.

His squadron usually numbered about 27 planes, he said, and had flown every type of mission. Only about two per cent of its operations was combat, where its pilots shot at the enemy and the enemy shot at them. Most of its work was "close support"—strafing and bombing in direct cooperation with ground forces.

MAJOR IS MODEST 6-10-44

"I do not think I can put my hand on any one incident that was outstanding as a combat mission for the organization," Major Roberts said. (The 99th got eight enemy planes on one day and 16 during a 12-day period in January-February, to bring its total to 17 confirmed victories. Its pilots have numerous "probables" and damaged planes to its credit —Editor.)

"At the time we went into combat Africa had just fallen We met at that time, as new pilots, the best the Germans had in that theatre.

"We were escorting bombers and the Germans were fighting to protect the land in their control."

ABOUT NAZI PILOTS

During that period the crack German Yellowbellies and Checkertails were furnishing the opposition. The 99th was dive-bombing objectives on Pantelleria and escorting bombers.

Major Roberts said experience is lacking on the part of German pilots, but they are good and they are definitely of the opinion that the Axis is going to win the war.

"They require all the attention anybody flying against them can possibly give them," he added.

THEIR ASSIGNMENTS 6-10-44

The 99th did "close support" work around Cassino and on the Anzio-Nettuno beachhead—flying over the front lines and attacking enemy machine-gun nests that might hold up the ground forces, shooting up pillboxes, strafing German troops in trenches and dropping bombs on enemy front lines. (At this the squadron was recently called the best in Italy by the Allied Air Chief in Italy—Editor.) They also flew on patrol duty over the Anzio beachhead, he said.

Asked about "racial angles," Major Roberts replied there was none. "We went over and got our training. Other outfits got their training. We moved up and went to work, and they moved up and went to work."

ABOUT "RACIAL ANGLES"

He said pilots of the 99th had flown with other groups. "We have gone into the air on missions in which there were approximately 100 aircraft in the air," he said. "We have flown as individuals with other units. We have also had pilots from other units to fly with us.

47a-1944

99th Commander Relates Flyers' Exploits Abroad

Afro American - Baltimore, Md.

Major Roberts, Home for Rest, Tells Press Conference Few Original Members Are Left

6-10-44

WASHINGTON (NNPA) — Major George S. Roberts, commander of the 99th Fighter Squadron, home from Italy for a rest, is eager to go back overseas, he told a press conference here last week.

Holder of the Air Medal with two oak leaf clusters, the 25-year-old flyer, native of Fairmont, W.Va., has had some 100 hours of operational flying and has completed 78 missions. The 99th, he said, has flown over 3,000 combat missions or sorties altogether.

A sortie is a combat flight by a single plane. A mission is any flight, including those during which there is no contact with the enemy. Of Major Roberts' 78 missions, 73 were also sorties.

6-10-44

"Can Do Anything"

Major Roberts declared that his men can do and have done "everything a fighter pilot can do." He said the squadron's total bag of seventeen planes was no larger because most of its activity has been void of "dog fights" with enemy flyers.

As bomber escorts, and air support for ground forces, however, the outfit has piled up a formidable tally of enemy trucks, jeeps, dumps and other installations and they have done considerable ground strafing of machine gun emplacements and troop concentrations.

Only about 20 per cent of the original members remain with the 99th, he revealed. Two pilots are known to have been killed in action, three others are missing, and one is believed to be a prisoner of war. Others have been grounded because of fatigue and a few have returned to the United States to become instructors.

6-10-44

No Racial Problem

The youthful major emphatically declared that no question of racial discrimination figured in the treatment of the squadron at any time, adding that on several occasions his pilots had flown with white pilots. He was convinced also, he said, there there had been no difference in the training received by the 99th pilots from that of any others.

about post-war plans, oberts unhesitatingly re- at he wants to keep on anything with wings." He would prefer he admitted to remain with the Army Air Forces. A graduate of West Virginia State College, Major Roberts was at Tuskegee in 1942. He was promoted to first lieutenant March of 1943, and went abroad a month later. He assumed command of the 99th Squadron last September, and was promoted to the rank of major in December.

99th Wrecks Nazi Lines

Informer - Houston, Texas

(Copyright, Reproduction prohibited)

5-27-44

ADVANCED AIR BASE.—Pioneers of the 99th Pursuit Squadron continued their blistering dive-bombing attacks against German supply lines, railroad junctions, and motor transports this week, giving commendable support to Allied troops surging past the Gustav line.

With Rome as the immediate Allied goal, P-49 Warhawks poured thousands of pounds of explosive fragmentation and incendiary bombs into behind-the-line towns, where key German installations are stacked in the path of the determined drive of the American Fifth and British Eighth armies.

A squadron, comanded by Captain Erwin B. Lawrence, Cleveland, in six days of intense and well patterned bombing, soared past the 300 sortie mark. They received commendation from front line commanders.

Lister among the squadron's targets, which in virtually every case was grounded to bits, were Esperia, Itri, Fondi, and Castell Onorato. In the latter town the pilots registered six direct hits, forcing the German ground forces, guarding the city, to display the white flag of surrender to the Allied forces that were storming through.

Giovanni, Vallesora, Ceccano, Uezze, Cisterna, Littoria, and Castro 'D Volsci were hit later. Motor transports were specific objectives of the later attack. Havoc was wrecked on all of the squadron's missions.

5-27-44

Lieutenant Leonard M. Jackson, Fort Worth, is describing the activity declared: "We were so low at one time that I could see the color of the enemy soldier's uniforms."

99th

ANSWERS COURIER'S STORY ON 99th VETS

Pittsburgh Courier, Pa.

12-2-44

WASHINGTON—In explanation of the transfer of the 15 veteran pilots of the 99th from the Tuskegee Air Field to twin-motor bomber training at Douglas Air Field in Arizona, the War Department this week pointed out that the current Army Air Force policy is to place some combat veterans in every new group going overseas. This sprinkling of veterans among the uninitiated gives the new group some semblance of seasoning before it goes into combat and boosts the morale of the inexperienced personnel, according to Army authorities.

The situation which faced the Negro medium bombardment unit now in training, according to the War Department, was unusual in that there were no veteran Negro medium bomber pilots either returned from combat or in combat. It was thus decided to call upon the 15 veterans of the 99th to provide experience for the new unit.

The explanation from the bureau of public relations of the War Department continues:

CHANGE NOT UNUSUAL

"Obviously it would have been preferable to have had some experienced bomber pilots instead of fighter pilots, but it is not unusual for single engine pilots to go into twin engine, or even four engine training. P-38 and P-61 fighters are twin-engined, the latter being nearly the size of a medium bomber . . . The transition from fighters to bombers often is not so difficult as might be imagined."

Replying indirectly to charges that the transferred pilots are resentful of their new assignment, preferring to remain as fighter pilots or as instructors to fighter pilot trainees at Tuskegee, the statement continues:

NO ASSIGNMENTS PROMISED

12-23-44

"The impression among pilots returning from combat that they will be assigned as flight instructors seems to be a fairly general one, but not altogether accurate. There is a variety of assignments for them, including a second tour of combat after remaining in the United States for several months. The current requirements govern the assignments and in no case is a specific assignment promised an individual before he reaches a redistribution station."

The War Department statement follows a request from The Courier for information concerning the transfer of the 15 pilots who last week were reported as indignant over their transfer from the Tuskegee post, looking on the move as another step in the apparent policy of the field to keep all key positions in the hands of white officers.

99th Pilot

Daily World - Atlanta, Ga.

Among Raiders Freed By Reds

12-10-44

On Escort Duty In Romania Oil Bombing Aug. 26

WASHINGTON, D. C.—(NNPA)—A slightly built, 24-year-old first lieutenant of the 99th Fighter Squadron flew into Washington last Tuesday on a four-day assignment to assist in the Sixth War Loan Drive. His retiring manner gave no clew to the experiences he had been through.

He was Lt. Henry A. Wise, Jr., of Cheriton, Va. On his left shoulder was the insignia of the 15th Air Force stationed in Italy. He has been home since October, but he can't go back to the European theatre because he is a repatriated prisoner of war.

12-10-44

Lt. Wise was the only Negro among approximately 300 American pilots and air-crew men who were released from prison camps in Bulgaria by the invasion of the Russians two months ago. Like the others, he had come down in enemy territory during one of the raids on the Ploesti oil fields in Romania on Aug. 26.

ON ESCORT DUTY

12-10-44

Wise was on escort duty. Returning from the raid, his plane caught fire and he bailed out. He landed in a corn field in Bulgaria, where soldiers were waiting for him to come down. They tried to question him, speaking in Bulgarian, German and French. Unable to make him understand, they took him to their headquarters until someone could be found who spoke English.

Apparently the Bulgarians had never seen a Negro before, Lt. Wise told the NNPA. Everywhere he was moved, he was the subject of surprised stares, a regular exhibition. But he was treated no differently from the other prisoners. They all slept in the same room, ate from the same mess. The food, the housing and the sanatation was poor, he said, but seemed to be the best the Bulgarians had to offer.

When word that the Russian capture of the area was inevitable reached the prison area, the prisoners were moved out over the border and surrendered to the allies. Bulgaria capitulated to the Russians and in reprisal, the Germans strafed Bulgarian territory. The prison camp from which the air men had been moved just the night before was thoroughly strafed by the Germans the following morning.

12-10-44

OVERSEAS STAY SHORT

Wise's stay overseas was a short one because of his experience. He went over in July and was returned in October. He can't go back to the same theatre, because, under international law, should he do so and become a prisoner of war again, he could be shot as a spy. He will be assigned, probably, to Walterboro or Tuskegee.

He had been on only 13 missions between his arrival overseas in July and his capture in August. During those missions, escorting bombers and strafing the enemy, he said he ran through plenty flak (anti-aircraft fire) but met no enemy fighter plane opposition.

When he returned to his base in Italy, his buddies were amazed. They did not know until two days before his arrival that he was a prisoner. He had been reported missing in action, and many had given him up.

12-10-44

Now he's back in the U. S., where he will likely stay for the duration, because the Army Air Forces have seen fit to assign Negro fighter groups to only one theatre of combat.

99th Veteran to Teach at TAAF

Afro American - Baltimore, Md.

11-25-44

TUSKEGEE, Ala.—Lt. Charles H. DeBow of Indianapolis, a veteran member of the 99th Fighter Squadron who served several months in the Mediterranean Theatre, recently returned to the States and has been assigned to the Army Air Field here as an instructor. One of the first to receive wings here, Lt. DeBow, who graduated in March, 1942, attended Indiana University from 1937 to 1938 and Hampton Institute from 1938 to 1940.

Lt. DeBow

A member of the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, the fighter pilot is married to the former Miss Gertrude Carter of Montgomery, Ala., and before entering the armed forces was a public accountant in Indianapolis.

Pittsburgh Courier

99th Airman Released From Bulgaria Camp

12-16-44 Pg.

By HARRY McLAURIN

WASHINGTON, D. C.—(CNNPA)—A slightly built, 24-year-old first lieutenant of the 99th Fighter Squadron flew into Washington last Tuesday on a four-day assignment to assist in the Sixth War Loan Drive. His retiring manner gave no clew to the experiences he had been through.

He was Lt. Henry A. Wise, Jr., of Cheriton, Va. On his left shoulder was the insignia of the 15th Air Force stationed in Italy. He has been home since October, but he can't go back to the European theatre because he is a repatriated prisoner of war.

Lt. Wise was the only colored pilot among approximately 300 American pilots and air-crew men who were released from prison camps in Bulgaria by the invasion of the Russians two months ago. Like the others, he had come down in enemy territory

during one of the raids on the Ploesti oil fields in Romania on August 26.

Apparently the Bulgarians had never seen a colored man before. Lt. Wise told thte NNPA. Everywhere he was moved, he was the subject of surprised stares, a regular exhibition. But he was treated no differently from the other prisoners.

—— A Colored Judge ——

Former 99th Pilots; Resting In States, Tell How It Felt When They Were Shot Down At Anzio

Call — Kansas City, Mo.
5-26-44

By CLAY CLAIBORNE

ATLANTIC CITY. — (ANP) — Here's how colored fighter-pilots talked about their battle experiences, while resting at AAF Redistribution Station No. 1 in Atlantic City.

Three veterans of the all-colored 99th fighter squadron, formerly the 99th pursuit squadron, added their adventures together and decided it was more dangerous to chug along a Sicilian road in a two-and-a-ahalf than to get shot down.

Capt. Clarence C. Jamison, 26, of 2252 E. 85th St., Cleveland, told how he crashed on the Anzion beachhead without getting hurt although the engine of his P-40 was shot out by Focke-Wulfs while he was doing 300 miles an hour at three-top level.

First Lt. Allen G. Lane, 26, of Demopolis, Ala., described how he also was unhurt when he had to bail out of his P-40 when it caught fire over Anzio.

But 1st Lt. Thomas H. Malone, 24, of 59 Chandler Ave., Detroit, wasn't so lucky. Never in combat because his duties as an administrative officer with the famous 99th kept him behind the lines, he nevertheless wears a Purple Heart.

Friends Overseas

These three colored army officers, friends overseas, met in Atlantic City, at the AAF Redistribution station, where they have received new assignments.

"We were in Sicily and moving up to Italy," Lt. Malone said. "I was in the cab of a 2½-ton supply truck when we hit a land mine the Germans had planted in the road.

"I thought my arm had been torn off and looked for it on the floor of the cab, but my arms were still attached."

Capt. Jamison and Lt. Lane consider themselves luckier than Lt. Malone.
5-26-44

"I got mixed up with four FockeWulfs over Anzio," asserted Capt. Jamison, veteran of 67 missions. "I was on the tail of one and started to fire but my guns jammed. Then I discovered two more FW's on my right and another on the left.

"I led them a good chase for a while, almost on the ground. Up and down every little hill. Missing high tension wires by inches. But they finally hit my engine. I cut he switches as soon as it started to smoke. I was doing at least 275 miles an hour, maybe more.

"But somehow I got down right although I clipped off a lot of little trees."

Veteran of 65 Missions

First Lt. Lane was also shot down with Jerry planes. "It was in mid-afternoon," declared the quiet, unassuming veteran of 65 missions, "when some of us on patrol over Anzio assault beach spotted Focke-Wulf fighter bombers coming in escorted by Messerchmitts.

"We had to attack through American flak to get to them, and it was rough. But it was our job to keep them away. We succeeded and Jerry was forced to drop his bombs at random. But my ship was hit and caught fire.

"By the time I bailed out the fight had moved quite far away but one of our ships circled me down to assure that nothing would be wrong. I landed safely near an airstrip at Nettuno."
5-26-44

Redistribution Center

The three officers were interviewed while stationed at the AAF Redistribution center. The center is a new project, established by Gen. Henry H. Arnold, commanding the army air forces, to assure proper re-assignment of air crewmen returning from abroad.

Gen. Arnold sees in the redistribution project an invaluable instrument for siphoning personnel with combat experience back into AAF's training program. Thus, not only will the knowledge these veterans gained abroad be placed at the disposal of young fliers at the training centers, but staff and administrative officers, technical officers, and instructors who are anxious to go abroad themselves, will be relieved from domestic duties and given their chance to go overseas.

On the human side, Gen. Arnold has emphasized the factor in the new project, "Redistribution."

"We took our air force personnel from the cream of America's youth," he has stated. "They've been put to severe mental and physical tests abroad, and they have come through with flying colors. First, they deserve rest, and then a chance to do what they've fitted to do. Finding out what that is, is the function of the redistribution center."
5-26-44

Emphasis can be well placed on the physical surroundings of the center here. At Atlantic City, the men are able to fish and swim; there are facilities for basketball, badminton and other sports in the huge Convention hall, and additional recreation is provided.

Before redistribution is started, every returning member of the AAF is given a chance to go home on furlough, for a vacation with his family, and when he reports to the redistribution station, he will be interviewed by some of the AAF's finest medical officers and classification personnel experts.

Jimcrow Sounds Death Knell Of 99th Squadron

Tribune — Harrisburg, Pa.
12-23-44

With The 15th U. S. Air Force in Italy — The jim crow policy of the United States is slowly but surely sounding the death knell for Col. Benjamin O. Davis' all-Negro fighter squadron.

Because the toll of men of the 99th group is being taken in wounded, missing or killed and because replacements come only from the colored air schools, which are training fewer men, a critical personnel shortage exists.

With 19 months of combat service to their credit, the group has seen action over Munich, Vienna, Toulon, Ploesti, Sofia, Belgrade, Friedrichshafen, Budapest and Salerno. They accounted for 17 enemy fighters and bombers in one day's work over the Anzio beachhead and have provided cover for heavy bombers, patrolled harbors, convoyed ships, hunted U-boats and made reconnaissance flights.

12-23-44

Portrait of 99th Capt. part of AAF historical records

Tribune — Los Angeles, Calif.
11-13-44

A portrait of Capt. Charles B. Hall, fighter pilot of the 99th squadron, now in Italy, is included in a representative list of AAF personnel paintings which were on exhibit until last Sunday in the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D. C.

Captain Hall, the first American Negro pilot to down a Nazi plane, is from Brazil, Ind., and was a pre-medical student before joining the AAF at Tuskegee Institute, Ala. He now has three German planes to his credit and wears the Air Medal and two Oak Leaf Clusters for bravery in action.

The painting is by Maj. Charles Haskereyill, a veteran of the last war, who volunteered for service in the present conflict and was given the assignment to paint a gallery of Air Forces personalities. All the paintings on exhibit are part of the historical record of the AAF. Representing events and characteristic scenes and actual portraits of the men now fighting or directing in battles all over the world, the collection will be hung permanently in the headquarters of the AAF in the Pentagon Building.

99th Flyers Put On Real Easter Party

Amsterdam News
New York, N.Y.

Two NYers Join Squadron As They Drop 'Eggs' From The Skies on the Enemy

4-22-44

WAR CORRESPONDENT
(Amsterdam News and Afro-American)

SOMEWHERE IN ITALY—Second Lieut. Theodore Mills, of New Rochelle, N. Y., and Second Lieut. Clarence Dart, of Elmira, N. Y., were among the new replacements who arrived here recently to join the 99th Fighter Squadron.

Their arrival, along with several other new pilots, was welcoming indeed to the many veterans, including Major George Roberts, who are looking forward to 30-day furloughs on American soil.

Easter Sunday marked the second time, some pilots said, "we've been dropping our eggs from the skies." They meant, in other words, that last Sunday was the second Easter they've spent on foreign territory.
4-22-44

Instead of egg-hunting, pilots from the 99th were on the lookout for enemy gun positions and supply transports. Nevertheless, the traditional Easter Sunday services were conducted by several chaplains representing various denominations.

Generally speaking, morale is not what it should be, as a result of camp area restrictions which interfere quite often with the natural desire for female companionship and a good drink of liquor.—L.

Air General Lauds 99th on Birthday

Afro American
Baltimore, Md.
8-19-44

TUSKEGEE, Ala. (ANP)—Major General Butler paid tribute to the men of the 99th Pursuit Squadron and the achievements made possible by the erection of the air field here in his address over a nation-wide radio hookup Wednesday on the third anniversary of Tuskegee Army Air Field.

"The 99th Pursuit Squadron's battle in the skies oved Europe, like your battle here to strengthen the fighting forces now, may be listed as a creditable chapter in the history of the air forces," said General Butler, who represented Gen. H. H. Arnold, head of the Army Air Forces.
8-19-44

"Three years ago," he continued, "this air base, the first in history to train colored pilots, was a huddle of tents. The landing field was a marshland. Men and bulldozers pushed hills into swamps in order to ready this field for the arrival of its first 500 troops by the fall of 1941.

Unit in Thought Only 3 Yrs. Ago

"Much depended on all these men," he continued. "The eyes of the nation were focused on Tuskegee, for here for the first time, colored aviation cadets were being groomed to fly war planes of a unit which was then a unit thought only — the 99th Pursuit Squadron."

The half-hour broadcast also featured a talk by Tuskegee's commanding officer, Col. Noel F. Parrish; interviews with Capt. Clarence Jamison, returned veteran of the 99th, a typical cadet, civilian employee and line chief.

The TAAF Cadet Glee Club offered "This Is It" and "We're Marching Over," original compositions of its director, Sgt. Philip Medley. Visiting bands from Fort Benning and from Maxwell and Gunter Felds gave concerts throughout the day.

gin special training at the Mili-
tary Code and Cipher School.
First Lt. Robert L. King, 62
Broone Street, Newark, N.J., and
Second Lt. Samuel L. Fuller, 836
Norwood Street, Norfolk, Va., are
the first officers of their group
selected for this highly special-
ized training.

Four-Week Course

After an intensified four-week course in cryptography during which they will learn to decode and decipher all kinds of codes, they will be given War Department certificates permitting them to handle any secret codes.

Lieutenants King and Fuller have been in Italy since January, when their fighter group arrived after training at Selfridge Field, Mich.

Study Decoding

By MAX JOHNSON
AFRO War Correspondent with U.S. Troops in North Africa

[Copyright. Reproduction in whole or in part expressly forbidden.]

NORTH AFRICA — Two pilots under the command of Lieutenant Col. Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., arrived in this area May 8 to be-

99th Officers

47a-1944

99th

Our Fighter Pilots Are a Credit to Us

Call-Kansas City, Mo.

The achievements of the 99HT fighter group led by Col. B. O. Davis Jr., give the Negro a satisfaction which goes deeper than the natural feeling of pride and relief which Americans feel when their side is beating the enemy. 10-20-44

Our fighter pilots are doing a big share in downing the Nazis in the Mediterranean theater of operations. They have shot down 75 enemy planes since June. This record was chalked up by brown Americans who some white Americans a few years ago thought lacked the skill to fly high-powered air planes.

The 99th pursuit squadron and the larger P-51 Mustang fighter group have belied all the American proponents of racial supremacy who fought against giving the Negro an opportunity to join the Air Force, considered the highest branch of the service. Therein lies the satisfaction which Negro Americans feel. 10-20-44

Those who said that Negroes were capable only of digging ditches and loading ships have had their theory blasted not only by the black pilots who skillfully maneuver their planes and run the enemy out of the sky but by the master mechanics who keep the giant flying ships in condition and by those engineering units which have built bridges and airfields, and by the thousands of Negro soldiers who are performing the many skilled jobs that go into making war.

Our pride in the 99th and the fighter group is no greater than it is in our ground troops but the air fighters are engaged in glamorous pursuits and naturally catch the public eye. But without the support of those on the ground, the work of the men in the air would be useless. 10-20-44

All of our troops who have been given the opportunity to show what they can do have performed well. They are doing a great service to their country and in doing so are giving new standing to their race.

99HT VETERANS . . . RETURN TO OLD CAMPING GROUND

Having just completed their first three years of service with the Army Air Forces, these veteran Tuskegee Army Air Field officers and enlisted men were all at one time with the now famous 99th Fighter Squadron which is making history in the European war theatre. They are now stationed at Tuskegee Army Air Field.

Pictured from left to right, 1st row: A/C Wendell Hockaday, Norfolk, Va.; Lt. O. O. Miller, Grand Rapids, Mich.; Lt. Kenneth Myles, New York City, and Cpl. Concord W. Turner, Champaign, Ill.

Second row: T/Sgt. Paul Woodson, Washington, D. C.; Cpl. Kenneth White, New York City; T/Sgt. John Spann, Philadelphia, Pa.; Sgt. John White, Birmingham, Ala.; Sgt. Andrew Collins, San Antonio, Texas, and T/Sgt. Clarence W. Nelson, Philadelphia, Pa.

Third row: M/Sgt. John Calloway, East Orange, N. J.; Cpl. Henry McLendon, New York City; Lt. Walter Moore, Winthrop, Mass.; Lt. Robert Marshall, Minneapolis, Minn.; Lt. Paul V. Freeman, St. Louis, Mo.; M/Sgt. James Blackstone, Annapolis, Md., and S/Sgt. Harry Woods, Lexington, Ky.—Photo by AAF Training Command.

ed in spirit, but too many of them still believe that eventually Adolph Hitler will be declared the winner.

They talk wishfully of secret weapons and gloat over the fact that the Allied armies have not opened the second front as yet. It is obvious that these prisoners were fed some powerful propaganda stories.

They really believe, for instance, that several American cities have been destroyed by German airmen who, according to the prisoners, flew to the United States from Paris.

99th At Rome

Activity in the Rome area last week was increased by the 99th Fighter Squadron as the famous unit continued to give effective support to the air attacks in the Cassino and Rome theatre of operations. 4-15-44

At the same time, Major George S. Roberts, the 99th's commanding officer, announced new promotions.

First Lieutenants Herbert L. Carter and Erwin B. Lawrence, the latter from Cleveland, were made captains and Second Lieutenants Lewis C. Smith, of Los Angeles, and Clarence W. Allen, of Mobile, Ala., became first lieutenants.

Capt. Lawrence's promotion came after he had spent 27 days in the hospital, recovering from wounds received during the 99th's raids on the beachhead at Anzio.

Capt. Charles B. Hall, who was among the first heroes in this outfit, will soon return to the United States. Awaiting reassignment also are Capt. James T. Wiley and Lieut. Willie H. Fuller. 4-15-44

All appear anxious to visit home but they are just as determined to be assigned to a combat zone again. Capt. Hall is credited with having destroyed at least three Nazi planes since his arrival last April 24.—L.

99th Buys Bond For Each Plane Downed

Journal + Guide — Norfolk, Va.

7-1-44

WASHINGTON, D. C.—Negro pilots of the 99th Pursuit Squadron, now busy dive-bombing and strafing the fleeing Nazis in the Levante sector of northern Italy, are striking double blows at the enemy, the Treasury Department revealed this week.

In addition to making regular salary allotments for War Bond purchases, the Negro fliers celebrate each air victory by purchasing a $1,000 bond for every enemy plane destroyed by a member of the squadron.

This sidelight on the unit's activities was reported to the Treasury Department this week by Major George S. Roberts commanding officer of the famous squadron, which completed a year of combat in North Africa, Sicily and Italy on the day that Rome fell to the Allies.

Major Roberts, now home on furlough, discussed the squadron's exploits while visiting the Army Air Forces War Bond Show, "Shot from the Sky," on the Monument Grounds in Washington, D. C. 7-1-44

MET THEIR QUOTAS

The $1,000-a-plane campaign was instituted by the unit during the Fourth War Loan drive, the commanding officer said, when the 99th Pursuit Squadron was battling German Fockewulf 190s over the Anzio-Nettuno beachhead in Italy. The men met their self-imposed quotas

99th Active In Italian War Theatre

Amsterdam News — New York, N.Y.

Reporter Says Prisoners Are a Sad and Dejected Looking Bunch

4-15-44

By ART CARTER

(Amsterdam News and Afro-American) War Correspondent

SOMEWHERE IN ITALY — On the whole, our prisoners of war are a sad and dejected looking bunch.

They are meek, tired and apparently anxious to remain in Allied prison camps. Their uniforms are dirty, faded and in many instances ill-fitting.

Actually, these Germans are lick-

14 New Pilots Join 99th Group

Journal + Guide — Norfolk, Va.

99th Still Active In Italian Drive; Tresville Relieved

7-1-44

By Lem Graves Jr.

Guide War Correspondent

(Copyright. Reproduction Forbidden)

ADVANCED ALLIED AIR BASE, Italy—(By Radio)—Fourteen pilots have just arrived here to join the Fight-

er Group commanded by Col. Benjamin O. Davis Jr., as replacements. Among them is one Norfolkian, 2nd Lt. Sanford Perkins, former instructor at Norfolk Polytechnic College and husband of Mrs. Margaret Parham Perkins, a Norfolk native. Lt. Perkins' native city is Denver, Colo.

Others in the replacement Flight G... pilots just arrived are: included Gould, Pitt... Lt. C. L. Jackson, Chi... 2nd Lt. R. E. Thompson, New Rochelle, N. Y. Lt. Alexander Jefferson 2nd Lt. Robert O.Neill, Detroit. 7-1-44 Lt. R. L. Martin, Du... 2nd Lt. Alfred O. Carrol, Washington, D. C. Lt. F. E. Roberts, Boston The fliers remained in North Lt. Howard Gamble Africa at a replacement pool for several days. Lt. Charles Duke, Port

Huntington, W. Va. ht Officer Cornelius P. 2nd Lt. Alfred M., Gorham Pittsburgh, Pa. Milwaukee, Wis. 2nd Lt. 2nd Lt. Iowa. Lt. 2nd Lt. Ill. 2nd Lt. Detroit. 2nd Lt. Iowa. 2nd Lt. 2nd Lt. Lt. 2nd Lt. Los Angeles, Calif. Charleston, Flight Officer William Hill. 2nd Lt.

NEW PILOTS 7-1-44

The new fliers, in addition to ... Lt. Perkins, are: Flight Officer C. N. Driver, Flight Officer

DANGEROUS MISSION

Meanwhile, the pilots of the Fighter Group carried out one of its most dangerous missions since coming overseas, when they flew on a strafing mission all the way across the peninsula to the southern coast of France, where they ran into the heaviest and most damaging anti-aircraft flak so far encountered.

TRESVILLE RELIEVED

Captain Robert B. Tresville has been succeeded as a squadron commander in the Fighter Group by 1st Lt. Andrew D. Turner, 24, of Washington, D. C. (The West Pointer's new duties were not indicated in the dispatch—Editor). 7-1-44

The Fighter Group faces a gruelling pace in the new assignment recently received to do armed reconnaissance in southern France. It involves a large number of pilots, who regretted the fact that adverse flying weather rendered it impossible to reach their target.

99TH FIGHTER SQUADRON OPERATES NEAR PISA

The oldest colored fighter squadron overseas, the famed 99th Fighter Squadron, last week was operating deep in the heart of Italy, slashing at targets in the vicinity of Pisa, and without sight of that city's famed leaning tower.

They also attacked military installation forming a bulwark of the German defenses at Florence, seat of modern Italian culture. 7-1-44

The fliers carried thousands of pounds of bombs for military targets, and helped soften up the Germans as the Fifth Army moved rapidly toward the beautiful city.

The pilots are constantly on the move, keeping up with the rapidly moving bombline. The outfit is busy every day from dawn to dusk, with missions taking time out for a "breather" only now and then.

They have moved their base as far forward as possible.

ANOTHER FLIER MAKES HIS 100TH MISSION 7-1-44

Last week also found 2nd Lt. Leonard M. Jackson, Fort Worth, Tex., hitting the century mark in the number of combat missions flown. In all now eight of the 99th's pilots have flown 100 or more missions.

1st Lt. Edward L. Toppins of San Francisco, Calif., leads with over 120 missions, although he has been overseas less than a ye...

Here Is The Funniest Story Of The War!

99th Crew Chief 'Borrows' P-40; He Flies It Too—But When He Tries To Land...!

Courier — Pittsburgh, Pa.

Plenty of Excitement As 'Immortal Sergeant' Goes A-Gunnin' for Germans

By OLLIE HARRINGTON, Courier War Correspondent

4-29-44

ALLIED AIR BASE, Italy—(Via Wireless)—T/Sgt. Henry Cornell, late of Montana and now a first rate mechanic and crew chief in the service group of the Air Force, never sweated through Tuskegee Army Flying School to earn coveted silver wings, but, today, he is probably the most discussed pilot in the Mediterranean Air Force. He literally roared into prominence in a "stolen" P-40 Warhawk plane and, now, fellow "grease-monkeys" rate him with the Eddie Rickenbackers, Colin Kellys and other air immortals.

Unfortunately, however, military authorities doubt the ranchbred non-com's right to rank with such immortal air heroes, due, in a large measure, to the fact that Sergeant Cornell's daring prank resulted in the loss of more than $50,000 worth of fighter plane. 4-29-44

AWAITED HIS CHANCE

Sergeant Cornell's "escapade" took place a few days ago when, after months of careful observation and note-jotting, the air-hungry "grease-monkey" came face to face with his big moment.

The mechanics were patching up the shot-up tail assembly on a P-39 Airacobra. Near them on a direct line, a sleek P-40 purred in the morning sun her propeller turning idly after a warmup.

EXCITEMENT BREAKS LOOSE 4-29-44

Suddenly, the engine burst into a throaty roar and, turning in the direction of the plane, mechanics were startled to see their crew chief bend forward in the tiny cockpit, adjusting a sheet of paper to the instrument panel. The ship taxied to the end of the strip and swung saucily into the wind. The light over the control tower was green and so the ship went roaring down the strip, picking up speed until its tail lifted and it seemed to leap into the air like wildfire. The news spread while mechanics, pilots and one or two colonels streamed onto the field, their eyes glued to the steep-climbing fighter. The wing of the plane dropped as it circled the field in a tight bank and, then diving, buzzed down the strip, sending "G. I. Joes" and "Brass Hats" alike plowing into the earth.

"Who the hell's in that ship?" bellowed a colonel, with fresh dirt covering him from head to foot.

"That's the flyingest son of a gun in the air force. I mean—er—that's Sergeant Cornell, sir," answered a mechanic from his place of refuge beneath a jeep.

"Shoot him down!" screamed another apoplectic "Brass Hat," spitting out chunks of good Italian grass. 4-29-44

NO GERMANS IN SIGHT

But the Warhawk climbed like a bullet and rolled over in the chandelle, heading out to sea in search of a German or two. Fortunately, perhaps, there were no Messerschmitt 109's out that bright morning and, so, after about an hour, the "immortal sergeant" headed for home. Arriving over the field, he glided beautifully, carefully reading the numbered instruments he had stuck up in front of him.

"Lower your landing gear," he later admitted reading; then—"open your canopy," whereupon down came the wheels and he pushed back the plexiglass canopy. But, here, capricious fate took a hand and a gust of wind blew the sheet of paper out of the cockpit, just when the ship was coming in nicely. With its wheels down, however, the plane began losing flying speed. What next, wondered Sergeant Cornell.

NARROW ESCAPE

The sergeant lowered the flaps and the flying speed was cut too much. The ship dropped its nose and hit the earth with a deafening crash, showering pistons, wings and the non-com himself all along the strip. It then burst into flames.

The ace was all one piece, except for a few missing teeth and, later, in the hospital tent, he told admiring "grease-monkies" he knew one thing: "I can fly a damned P-40!" 4-29-44

FINE BACKGROUND

Sergeant Cornell has been servicing Warhawks and Airacobras day in and out ever since he got his "greetings," constantly checking trim fighting ships before and after each mission. He was usually the first man on the line at dawn each morning to warm up the motors and each evening, long after the last flights came winging in, he could be found anxiously examining each minute detaol of the sleek fighters. He was considered one of the best crew chiefs by both mechanics and pilots. But Sergeant Cornell wanted to fly.

Back in the States, the sergeant had passed a flying cadet examination and was awaiting orders when his outfit was altered and shipped overseas here in Italy, where, since, he has settled down to tehe job of keeping Allied ships winging their way in flak-torn skies.

CONSCIENTIOUS ABOUT TASK 4-29-44

When his day's work was done and other mechanics invaded tiny Italian hamlets in search of mild pleasures, Sergeant Cornell poreding over books on navigation and flight theory. In fact, he has taken another examination in flight training, passing with a much better than average grade. But, a few days after that happened, an order came through cancelling all such appointments in this theatre of operations.

Most men would have been completely discouraged over such a run of tough luck, but Sergeant Cornell carried on his work without needing a "crying towel" and soon was topflight crew chief. The only difference friends noticed in him was that he seemed to watch pilots more carefully as they climbed into ships and checked their instrument panels. They noticed, too, that he jotaed down notes frequently in a tattered notebook.

That is the saga of the Allied armies' latest "immortal sergeant."

99th KNOCKS OUT PLANES

Amsterdam News

Flyers Down Five Nazis On Combat Mission In Italy; Lose Plane; Pilot Safe

New York, N. Y.

By ART CARTER
(War Correspondent)
Amsterdam News and Afro-American

ADVANCED ALLIED AIRBASE, Italy—Five Nazi planes were knocked out of the skies over an enemy airbase last Friday as fighter pilots, commanded by Col. Benjamin O. Davis, battled the Germans at an altitude of 15,000 feet.

A sixth German plane was believed to have been shot down. One of our planes failed to return but the pilot is alive, scouts in enemy territory reported. 6-17-44

Details of the exact location of the battle were not revealed by the High Command. Nevertheless, it was learned that our boys covered themselves with undying glory.

Flying New Planes

The boys from Tuskegee were flying new planes. Officials described the fighter-bomber as one of Uncle Sam's most vital weapons, particularly where low-altitude flying is necessary.

The new plane, identified as the Thunderbolt, is a very fast single-engined plane, the heaviest in the world. It can carry a great weight of bombs and has six or more .50-caliber machine guns.

Until the battle of last Friday few persons knew that our boys were using these planes.

Lieut. Robert H. Wiggins, 1341 E. 18th St., Brooklyn, was among the victorious pilots who returned to tell the story of how the Germans were blasted from the sky as their comrades turned back towards Florence. 6-17-44

Col. Davis, who engaged the enemy along with his men, estimated that there were at least 50 German planes in the air at the time.

Others credited with having participated were Lieuts. Frederick Funderburg, of Philadelphia, Melvin T. Jackson, of Warrentown, Va., Wendell O. Pruitt, of St. Louis, Charles M. Bussey, of Los Angeles, and William W. Green, of Staunton, Va.

Went Into Victory Rolls

As the pilots returned to their base, they went into victory rolls over the field and landed amid high enthusiasm. 6-17-44

Meanwhile, Gen. Mark Clark's ground forces continued to chase the enemy back towards the Pisa Line where the Germans are expected to temporarily halt their disorderly flight. San Stefano, an island 100 miles north of Rome, was reported in the hands of the Allies and the capture of Arezzo is expected within a few days.

Thousands of American Negro troops are fighting with the Fifth Army and a like number of Indians are marching and fighting along

...tage didn't mean a thing to the ...ays trained at Tuskegee. Captain Leon C. Roberts, flying his 109th ...ortie on reconnaissance, reported that eight American planes took "good care" of ten German trucks and three oil tanks.

"We were almost fooled by the ...trees moving along the highway," Captain Roberts said, "but a quick checkup showed that the 'trees' actually were supply trucks. When we left the scene there was nothing but smoke and dead Germans."—I...

SOMEWHERE IN ITALY.—Gen... man Field Marshal Albert Kessel... ring's former headquarters, an elab... orate underground strong... hold. It is now in the... Allies. A strong g... around the place t... boys in the Fighter... tinued to chase t... towards Terni and... Credit for locati... selring's once famous little den went to some of the boys of the 99th. It happened that they were among the first pilots to go on patrol duty in the Civita Castellana area which is about 15 miles north of Rome. The tunnel used by Marshal Kesselring was located three miles from Civita Castellana when our boys flew over the area looking for enemy supply trucks. 6-17-44 The enemy's efforts to camou...

Stronghold Yarns Underground Elaborate Tunnel in Italy is Now In Hands of the Allies

6-17-44

By ART CARTER
(War Correspondent)
(Amsterdam News and Afro-American

99th Helps Take Enemy

Amsterdam News

47a-1944

99th

99th Ace, Downed Three Nazis, In Chicago With Wife

Chicago Defender 6-24-44

Brown America's No. 1 "fighter pilot" is the youthful Capt. Charles Hall, veteran of 109 aerial missions of which 89 were actual combats with the enemy.

At the age of 23, with 34 months of action in the North African and Italian wars and 14 kills to his credit, the hero of the blazing 99th can boast three Nazi planes shot down under his fire.

Captain Hall arrived in Chicago this week after winning the service bar of "meritorious achievement while participating against the enemy in aerial flight," and the distinguished flying cross, awarded on May 25, while enroute to the U.S.A. The latter medal is recognition for the double-feature day in January of this year, when he reported to his base in Italy that two more German flyers had been de-winged. He is the only Negro holding this distinction, and was given the double oak-leaf clusters in addition to these, as a reward for his achievements.

Modest in his account of the part he played in these grueling encounters, Captain Hall insists that due credit be given the fine blocking squad who flanked him in all attacks.

Credits Teamwork

"Without their support it could never have been done," he told a Defender reporter. "Theirs was a job as important as mine, and the risk every bit as great, whether you ever hear of them or not," he said with sincerity.

Planes damaged? "Yes, of course . . . many times. No sortee is complete without some touch of the enemy," Captain Hall answers with a shrug. "But only once was my 'P-40 Warhawk' hit hard enough to force a landing."

Captain Hall and a Lieut. William Campbell of the same unit were the first two Negroes to be sent out on actual combat. He was on his eighth mission before he saw an enemy plane. Prior to his enlistment in 1941, Captain Hall was a third year student at East Illinois State Teacher's College. He won his commission as second lieutenant in July of 1942, and was made captain soon after he arrived on foreign soil one year ago, becoming the youngest officer of his rank in the company.

Born in Brazil, Indiana, Charles Hall is the son of Mrs. Anna Hall, whom he rushed to greet at the home of his married sister in Fort Wayne, after joining his bride of 18 months in Terre Haute. She was the former Marie Pyle, daughter of Atty. D. E. Pyle of that city. Leaving Chicago, Captain and Mrs. Hall will spend some time in New York before he reports for duty at his headquarters in Atlantic City June 28, when his leave expires.

BACK FROM ITALY FRONT

CAPT. AND MRS. CHARLES HALL

Pioneer 99th Members Dead

Afro American Baltimore, Md.

Capts. Mac Ross and Leon Roberts Crash

4 OTHERS MISSING

31 Air Medals, 1 Oak Leaf Cluster Awarded

8-12-44

By ART CARTER and MAX JOHNSON

AFRO War Correspondents with U.S. Troops in Italy

[Copyright. Reproduction in whole or in part expressly forbidden.]

ADVANCED AIR BASE IN ITALY. — Captains Mac Ross of Dayton, Ohio, and Leon C. Roberts of Prichard, Ala., pioneer members of the 99th Fighter Squadron were killed and four other members of the fighter group commanded by Col. B. O. Davis, Jr., reported missing here last month.

Having failed to return from an operational mission on July 18, Lts. Gene C. Brown of New York City and Wellington Irving of Elzoni, Miss., are both reported missing.

Missing in action for a month are First Lt. Maurice V. Esters of Richmond, Calif., and Capt. Andrew W. Maples, Jr., of Orange, Va., whose promotion from first lieutenant came through since his disappearance. 8-12-44

Captain Ross, one of the first five cadets to be graduated at the Tuskegee Army Air School, was killed in a crash near the fighter group's main base here on July 10. Flying on a routine transition flight, he failed to land on schedule. Efforts to locate him terminated in the discovery of his smashed craft some ten miles away from base. No details are available.

Captain Ross

Burial services were conducted at an Allied cemetery in Italy by Chaplain Cyrus Perry.

Ex-Operations Officer

Ross, formerly group operations officer, was serving as pilot in the pioneer squadron at the time of his fatal accident. He is the first member of the original class to die. 8-12-44

He is survived by a wife, Second Lieut. Abbie Ross, nurse at Tuskegee Airbase Hospital.

Captain Roberts, 23, was killed here July 11. Veteran of 116 missions, he was flying a P-51 plane on an operational mission when it is believed to have developed engine trouble and crashed before he could parachute to safety. The accident occurred shortly after his pioneer squadron had joined Colonel Davis's group in strategical operations with the 15th Army Air Force.

He had one air victory to his credit, having shot down a German FW-190 plane on January 27 in an operation with his pioneer squadron over Anzio. He held the air medal, two oak leaf clusters and had been recommended on June 27 for the third oak leaf cluster. At the time of his death, he was serving as an operations officer in the group.

Captain Roberts was commissioned at Tuskegee's Air Corps School in August, 1942, promoted to a first lieutenant in September, 1943, and to captain last April. He came overseas with the pioneer fighter squadron some sixteen months ago, serving in the North African and Sicilian campaigns as well as the present offensive. 8-13-44

He was unmarried and his mother, Mrs. Nellie A. Roberts, lives at Prichard.

Second Lt. Frederick Funderburg, Philadelphia, who shot down two Nazi ME-109 planes on June 9, has been awarded the oak leaf cluster while ten other Easterners are among the thirty-one pilots in the fighter group who received air medals.

Posthumous Award

A posthumous award of the air medal went to Second Lt. Othel Dickerson, 24, of 2806 Grant Street, Berkeley, Calif., killed when his plane crashed at this air base June 28.

Two pilots missing in action also were awarded the air medal. They are: Lieutenant Esters and Captain Maples.

Others awarded the air medal are: : 8-12-44

Capt. Melvin T. Jackson, Onley, Md.; Lts. Henry B. Scott, Jersey City, N.J.; Robert J. Friend, Washington; Charles A. Dunne, Atlantic City, N.J.; Robert H. Daniels, Jr., Corona, N.Y.; Gene C. Brown, New York; Robert H. Wiggins, New York; Leonard F. Turner, Washington; George M. Rhodes, Jr., Brooklyn, N.Y.; Jack D. Holsclaw, Portland, Ore.; Clarence D. Lester, Chicago; Wendell O. Pruitt, Chicago; Charles M. Bussey, Los Angeles; Arnold W. Cisco, Chicago; Walter M. Downs, Detroit; Joseph D. Ellsberry, Langston, Okla.; William J. Faulkner, Jr., Nashville; Harold E. Sawyer, Columbus, Ohio; Ulysses S. Taylor, Kaufman, Tex.; Alton F. Ballard, Pasadena, Calif.; Clarence H. Bradford, St. Louis; Joseph T. Gomer, Iowa Falls, Ia.; Stanley L. Harris, St. Paul, Minn.; Wellington G. Irving, Belzoni, Miss.; Lawrence (Bernie) Jefferson, Grand Rapids, Mich.; John H. Leahr, Cincinnati, Ohio; Joe A. Lewis, Alliance, Neb.; Claybourne A. Lockett, Los Angeles, Calif.

Ace Mechanic To Be On Air From Italy

Journal + Guide Norfolk, Va.

5-13-44

ADVANCED ALLIED AIR BASE, Italy—By Radio—Master Sgt. Ellsworth H. Dansby was scheduled to be heard from this theatre of war in a CBS broadcast on Wednesday, May 10, at 8 p.m., Eastern War Time.

The sergeant is the son of Mr. and Mrs. E. H. Dansby Sr., of 524 Shayworth avenue, Decatur, Ill. He is a veteran engineering line

SGT. DANSBY

chief with the 99th Fighter Squadron and is considered to be one of the most valuable enlisted men in the squadron.

This correspondent promised Sgt. Dansby faithfully that the Guide, on receipt of this dispatch, would notify his family so that they would be sure to hear his voice. He has been overseas since April, 1943, going over with the famous aerial organization.

(A wire was sent to the Dansby family in Decatur a few minutes after this radio dispatch was received—Ed.)

LOVES FLYING

In an earlier dispatch published while he was covering the 99th Fighter Squadron, Guide War Correspondent Thomas W. Young wrote:

"M/Sgt. Dansby, as line chief, is responsible for the work of the mechanics, crew chiefs, propeller specialists, engine specialists, electricians, carburetor experts, instrument specialists, and several other technicians.

"He has flying in his blood, and has been hanging around airports ever since e was big enough to walk. 5-13-44

"He learned flying as a youngster—back in the barnstorming days when you just got into a plane and flew it with or without prescribed training, with or without license.

"In 1939, when the Civil Aeronautics Authority required all pilots to meet certain standards, Dansby qualified and got his license. He now has 300 hours to his credit, 70 of them logged.

HAS PILOT'S LICENSE

"He went to Milligan College in Decatur for two years and spent another year at the University of Illinois. In March, 1941, he received a letter from Judge William H. Hastie, then civilian aide to the Secretary of War, telling him that a pursuit (later fighter) squadron was going to be formed with an all-Negro personnel and advising him to go to the nearest Air Corps recruiting station and sign up.

"Dansby has gone as high as he can in the non-commissioned officers and commissioned officers. He took (and passed) several examinations, but his application to become a flying cadet was never acted on favorably.

99th Fighter Nine Cops Adriatic Title and $125

Afro American—Baltimore, Md.

By ART CARTER

AFRO War Correspondent with

U.S. Troops in Italy

[Copyright. Reproduction in whole or in part expressly forbidden.]

ALLIED AIR BASE IN ITALY —(Air Mail) — Climaxing the league season with a five-hit, 5-0 victory over an infantry company team, the 99th Fighter Squadron nine recently collected $125 in prize money and the league title in the Adriatic Baseball League.

Captain Bernard Proctor, former Wilberforce University star, Philadelphia, Pa., hurled the five-hit tilt that brought the squadron's final standing to 12 wins; 2 losses. Two of the victories were gained by forfeits and one of the losses the same way.

The team scored 74 runs to opponents' 33, and captured two shutout victories. The majority of its players are former semi-pro players and high school stars.

The Panther nine roster includes, besides Capt. Proctor:

S-Sgt. Lionel (Bounce) Grimes, captain and centerfielder, 1131 E. Patterson Street, Alliance, Ohio; Sgt. Cyril (Bill) Byron, former Morgan College grid star, catcher, 1809 Prospect Avenue, Bronx, N.Y.; S-Sgt. Joseph C. (Deke) Howard, 53 Cedar Hill, Brooklyn, Md., first baseman; Sgt. Joseph A. (Casey) Taylor, 531 Vodges Street, Philadelphia, Pa., shortstop.

Sgt. Charles M. Hinds, 2805 Cortelyou Road, Brooklyn, N.Y., third baseman; Cpl. Donald G. (Duck) Campbell, Washington, Pa.; T-Sgt. Herbert H. Nichols, Masantown, Pa., rightfielder; Cpl. Kermit E. Brown, 120 W. 123rd Street, NYC, pitcher; Sgt. Joseph H. Spooner, 56 W. 99th Street, NYC, second baseman; S-Sgt. Charles A. Scarcy, Lockhart, Tex., utility infielder; Sgt. Raymond Scruggs, 1365 Lyman Place, NYC, pitcher; S-Sgt. Wiscamon Vaughn, 4527 Evans Avenue, Chicago, Ill., pitcher.

S-Sgt. Elliott Culp, Fredericks-town, Pa., is coach, and Cpl. Leo S. (Lippy) Holmes, 1205 W. Second Street, Chester, Pa., manager.

Davis' Fliers Knock Out 83 Nazi Planes

Courier — Pittsburgh, Pa.

9-9-44

By OLLIE HARRINGTON, Courier War Correspondent

AN ADVANCED AIR BASE IN ITALY—Pilots of Col. Benjamin O. Davis' Mustang Fighter Group are now helping clear the way for the Red Army in its swift advance through the Balkans. Strafing Nazi airdromes and troop installations in the Balkans, the colored fliers are blasting a grim path for the determined, battle-hardened Red Army troops' motorized columns.

Having covered themselves with distinction in the last two months of the stepped-up war, the Negro pilots were sent from Rome to the Balkan battle area to pound the frantically retreating Wehrmacht last week. A communique issued by the AAF-RAF public relations office stated that an all-Negro Group carried out the most effective machine-gunning of German aircraft on a single airfield yet reported in the Mediterranean theatre.

KNOCK OUT 83 NAZI PLANES 9-9-44

Colonel Davis' pilots knocked out at least 83 aircraft on that day's strafing alone. Photo reconnaissance and the observations of attacking pilots indicated unusual concentrations of aircraft on normally less active bases. This was the result of Russian occupation of the airfields of the Danube basin. Intelligence officers point out that the failure of Nazi planes to take to the air to void destruction was due to the fuel shortage caused by the 15th Air Force's destruction of Nazi oil fields and that the Mustang Group provided cover for the bombers during the final stages of the crushing raids on Ploesti and other oil fields.

The latest attack by the group was headed by Capt. Alonzo Davis, the group deputy commander, who led the Mustangs in five separate passes over the base. The squadrons flew in from different directions, diving from 14,000 feet to within 50 feet of the parked planes. As the P-51's pulled up after the last pass the airdrome was dotted with fires and the smoke was rising hundreds of feet into the air.

NAZIS SHOW NO FIGHT

They were parked there like sitting ducks," said Captain Davis, "and all we had to do was line up our sights and shoot."

"During the lightning attack not one plane got into the air," said First Lt. Roger Romaine, Oakland, Calif. "When we went in we looked like a cloud of grasshoppers swarming over a field of ripened wheat." 9-9-44

According to veteran pilots, this raid was even more devastating than the historic lightning P-38 raid on Foggia a year ago when the American fighter pilots swarmed into Italy to seek vengeance on the Nazi luftwaffe after the latter's raid of an American airfield, during which many of the fliers lost their comrades.

Last of Original 99th Pilots Reported Missing in Action

By ART CARTER

AFRO War Correspondent with U.S. Troops in Italy

[Copyright. Reproduction in whole or in part expressly forbidden.]

FIFTEENTH AAF BASE IN ITALY.—(By Cable)—Capt. Erwin B. Lawrence, Jr., 25, of 2128 Ninetieth Street, Cleveland, the last pilot of the original 99th Fighter Squadron to see continuous service overseas, is missing in action.

Captain Lawrence, who served as commanding officer of the squadron during the furlough in the States of Maj. George S. Roberts, failed to return from a strafing mission over Greece during the intensive attacks on German airfields there early in October.

Details are unavailable, but pilots who returned from the same mission reported that Lawrence's plane was hit by flak and was believed to have crashed.

Fighting 17 Months

Lawrence was squadron operations officer. He served as assistant operations officer when he first came overseas with the 99th in April, 1943, and until his elevation to commander. He returned to operations when Roberts returned.

He had been in combat for seventeen months, flying eighty-one dive-bombing missions with the pioneer squadron and adding nearly twenty additional missions as a Mustang pilot.

He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Erwin B. Lawrence, Sr., and a former student at Tuskegee Institute. His wife, Blanche, resides at 5315 Dorchester Avenue, Chicago.

CAPT. ERWIN B. LAWRENCE

47a-1944

Negro Fighter Pilots Extolled In O. S. Journal

"SOME OF BEST FIGHTING OVER ITALY DONE BY THESE"

South Pittsburg, Tenn., Hustler
February 10, 1944

Says 99th U. S. Fighter Squadron, All-Negro Outfit, Has Been In Operation In That Area Several Months — Other News Among the Colored.

By Ella McElroy

A newspaper clipping from the Ohio State Journal, printed for the benefit of our group who do not know that our boys are doing their bit in the air as well as on land and sea to help win the war comes to hand; and we shall thank the local editor to print same. It reads as follows:

"Some of the best fighting in the air over Italy is being done by the 99th U. S. Fighter Squadron, an all-Negro outfit that has been in operation in that area for several months. In their latest action, these boys shot down eight of 28 enemy planes, which engaged them in dogfights above the beachhead at Nettuno, where our land invasion forces are pushing ahead determinedly toward Rome and the Appian Way.

"Ever since they reached the scene of action, these fighter pilots have been chalking up victories and writing a new chapter in the history of their race. Flying Warhawks, for the most part, the boys have shown themselves to be fearless and resolute; often they have chased superior enemy forces, sometimes almost to Rome. Not once have they been reported as defeated.

"There is soon to be at least one fighting ship in the Navy which will be manned entirely by Negroes. Who can doubt that when this ship gets into action it will live up to every tradition of our Navy?

"This is by no means the first time that Negroes in war have earned the praise of all our people. It has not been forgotten that when the battle of San Juan hill was going against us in the Spanish-American War, it was the famous Negro cavalry, fighting as foot soldiers, who stormed up that formidable slope and saved the day."

Impressive communion services were held in all the churches Sunday morning. The attendance was fair. Rev. L. J. Judkins, of Chattanooga, was guest speaker at the Zion Methodist church. Rev. D. A. Sappington, pastor. Under the auspices of the Ministers' Alliance a service observing the World Day of Prayer will be held February 25. All are requested to attend.

The city-wide Missionary Society held its regular meeting at the Baptist church Monday afternoon. Seventeen members were present. Mrs. Jannie Stapler presided. The membership and welfare committees made splendid reports. Plans were made for a special program the first Sunday in March. One dollar was donated to Alton Pendergrast who continues ill in a hospital in Nashville.

The citizens are very grateful to Editor Woodfin for the generous space in the Hustler for the fine eulogy on the life and work of our good Dr. W. J. Astrapp by Clarence Benton. No one could have given it better than he did, being a beneficiary of finance and influence. To his credit he finished Lincoln University in Pittsburg, Pa., with honor and has made an enviable record in every position he has held.

The Demonstration Club will hold its regular meeting Friday, February twenty-fifth at 1:30. The state agent, Mr. Milton, will accompany Miss Woods and demonstrate to the members and friends how to make a hot bed for early plants. The men are urged to be present. As Victory gardens will soon require your attention and early plants will be ready.

The basketball teams of McReynolds High are making good records this year. The girls are leading. They defeated Townsend High in Winchester last Friday.

You will be thrilled to see them at their best Friday evening, February 11 at 8:00 o'clock. The teams from Winchester will be our guests.

He Bags No. 14

—Second Lieutenant Elwood T. Driver, of 30 Fountain Avenue, Trenton, New Jersey, who on February 4, 1944, downed a German plane over the Anzio beachhead below Rome. This victory brought to 14 the number of enemy planes destroyed by the Ninety-Ninth Fighter Squadron. Thirteen of the victories were won over the Nettuno-Anzio beachhead. (Photo by Army Air Forces.) 9 February, 1944.

Atlanta, Ga., Constitution
February 13, 1944

99th Squadron

Editor, Constitution: Your editorial, "How You Like Them, Adolph?" appearing in the February 9 issue, was very commendable. It is this type of journalism that helps to combat false race theories and defeat Fascism wherever it is found.

Many Negro service men read your editorial, which was displayed on the bulletin board of our center, and they all glowed with pride over the accomplishments of the 99th Fighter Squadron, and many expressed their appreciation that these accomplishments are being recognized.

It was a good job of morale building—may you continue the good work.

CHARLES W. GRENLEA,
Director Service Men's Center.

Negro Airmen Down 8 Planes

CONSTITUTION-ATLANTA
1-29-44

ALGIERS, Jan. 28.—(AP)—The 99th U. S. Fighter Squadron, an all-Negro outfit which has been in operation in this theater for several months, was credited with eight of the 28 enemy planes destroyed in dogfights yesterday over the Nettuno beachhead.

The squadron, first Negro squadron to go into action, was in fights both in the morning and in the afternoon. In the morning fight some Focke-Wulf 190s were chased almost back to Rome.

"I was following and was weaving a lot but I got a burst into his right wing and he flopped over on his back and into the ground," said Lieutenant Robert Leon C. Roberts, of Prichard, Ala., describing one encounter.

Atlanta, Ga., Journal
January 29, 1944

The 99th's First Battle

THE SUCCESS of the 99th U. S. Fighter Squadron in the air battles over the Nettuno beachhead Thursday will be gratifying to all Americans, whatever their race or position. It should be cause for especial pride among our Negroes.

The 99th Squadron is manned and officered wholly by Negroes. It received the greater part of its training at Tuskegee, Ala. Many, perhaps most, of its members were reared in the South.

The outfit has been in the Mediterranean Zone for several months and has served its combat apprenticeship with credit, but the big test did not come until the Germans opened their belated fight to defeat the Nettuno expedition. In aerial battles, 25 Nazi planes were shot down. Of these eight fell under the fire of the 99th.

No military unit can be sure of itself until it has been tested in the crucible of conflict. Every cavalryman must win title to his spurs by his mettle in action. The fine performance of the 99th in its first desperate adventure will give its members a confidence in themselves that will make the 99th a unit to be feared by the enemy.

Guard of Honor. London disclosed that some time ago in Italy the R.A.F. high command, "on an inspection tour," paused at the end of a makeshift airstrip to watch pilots of the all-Negro U.S. 99th Fighter Squadron take off on a special mission with two 500-lb. bombs loaded under each of their P-40 Warhawks. Just as one plane was off the ground its engine conked out.

The ship crashed 20 yards from the inspection party and skidded into a ditch, scraping the bombs along the rough ground. Among the brass hats who hit the dirt and hugged it were Air Chief Marshal Sir Charles Portal, Air Chief Marshal Sir Arthur Tedder, Air Marshal Sir Arthur Coningham and Air Vice Marshal Harry Broadhurst. Said the philosophical pilot, emerging from the wreckage: "If those things had gone off, I would have gone to heaven with a lot of high-powered company."

Score For 99th Is Raised To 14

Daily World
Atlanta, Ga. 2-9-44

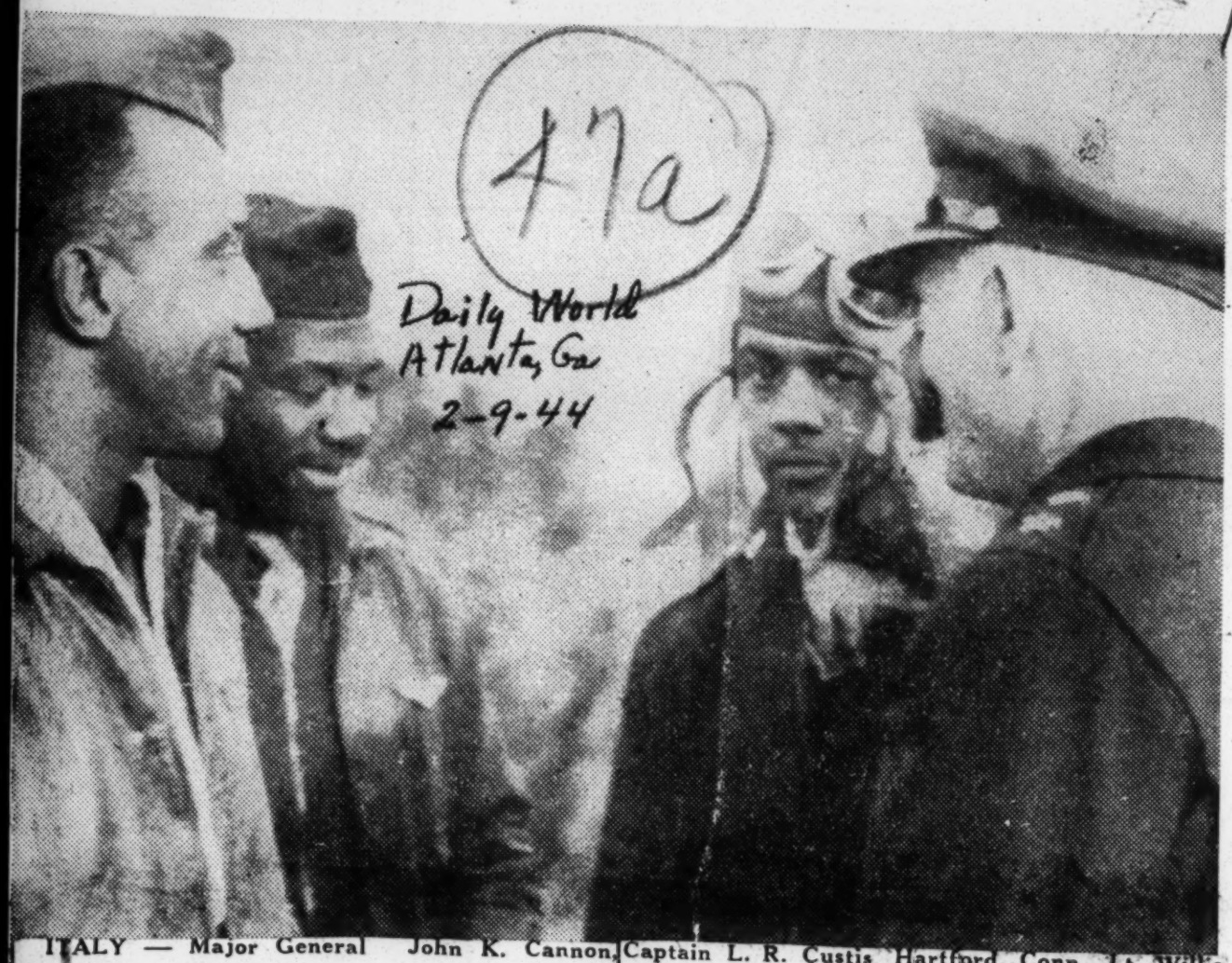
ALLIED HDQ., Algiers—(A N P)—Raised by Gen. Arnold, head of the army air force, Saturday for shooting down 12 Nazi planes during last week's heavy fighting to hold the vital beachheads at Anzio-Nettuno, the 99th Pursuit Squadron of America's all-colored fighter group continued to fly to glory this Mediterranean, by adding another enemy plane to 99th's activities during the past week. the sudden [illegible] was protecting troops on the Anzio beachhead, Saturday.

Lt. Driver's exploit followed close-[illegible] Elwood T Driver, Trenton, N. J. was credited with destroying a German Focke-Wulf while the squadron [illegible] victims and probably more, when they chalked up 12 victories and [illegible] Gen. Ira C. Eaker [illegible] the squadron a chance to [illegible] guish itself in a manner [illegible] zi, and during the sole [illegible] last week, the sudden [illegible] raised by the Nettuno [illegible] able. "My best wishes [illegible] continued success," his [illegible] Gen. Eaker said.

With Capt. Charles [illegible] Driver's latest victories [illegible] two day sweep [illegible] Deiz Portsmouth, Va. [illegible] Sumter, S. C.; [illegible] Alabama; [illegible] Fritchard, Ala.; [illegible] Petersburg, Va. 2-9-44

At least one of the fliers is known to have chased a Focke-Wulfe 190 [illegible] more, plus 2nd all the way over Rome before [illegible] victory, giving them 14 victories to their credit.

As Commander Praised Black Warhawks



ITALY — Major General John K. Cannon, commander of the 12th AAF, is shown commending pilots of the 99th Fighter Squadron which on January 27 and 28 shot down 12 German planes over the battle area south of Rome. L to R are Captain L. R. Custis, Hartford, Conn., Lt. Willie Ashley, Sumter, S. C.; Lt. W. V. Eagleson, Bloomington, Ind.; each of whom was credited with one enemy plane. —(Army Signal Corps Radio Telephoto.)

47a

Daily World
Atlanta, Ga
2-9-44

The squadron, first Negro outfit to go into action, was in fights both in morning and in the afternoon. In the morning fight some Focke-Wulf 190's were chased almost back to Rome.

"I was following and weaving a lot but I got a burst into his right wing and he flopped over on his back and into the ground," said Lieut. Robert Leon C. Roberts, of Pritchard, Ala., describing one encounter.

LONDON NEWSPAPERS PRAISE NEGRO UNITS

LONDON — The success of the American Negro fighter pilots in Italy was given front-page prominence by London newspapers today 1-29-44

All three afternoon papers played up the account of how the Negroes, flying Warhawks, bagged eight German planes south of Rome yesterday.

The 99th Pursuit Squadron

Daily World - Atlanta, Ga. 3-4-44

Distinguishing themselves for the first time in the 11 months they have been overseas, the 99th Pursuit Squadron went in last Friday after the German Luftwaffe in a manner that clearly demonstrated their heroism in war and their eagerness for battle. Commanded by Captain Rodney Custis of Hartford, Connecticut, the 99th outfit left their base in North Africa on Friday and got into the fray quickly in the section above the "cross-Italy" line of the Germans and bagged eight planes, while on Saturday they returned and accounted for four more.

While Americans, especially colored Americans, view this record of courage and bravery with a pardonable degree of pride, it is difficult for us to overlook or ignore the woeful lack of Negro soldiers in any appreciable numbers, in combat duties in this war. "An unbelievably large amount of time and energy is spent in the War Department and in the field trying to work out and carry out plans for using colored personnel and at the same time keep them separated from whites," said Judge William Hastie, former Civilian Aide to the Secretary of War. 2-4-44

On the same subject, Walter White, Secretary of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, writing in the January issue of Negro Digest said, "Negroes are serving at least in a token capacity in nearly all branches of the Army. A much more equitable administration of the Selective Service System has been achieved in this war than the last. But the general overall pattern is the same—segregation, compromises, hesitation. Negro combat units have been activated in some instances for nearly three years only to be shunted from camp to camp in the United States because the Army leadership has been unable to make up its mind how to use them. Negro combat troops have seen little action, while all the offensives of the United States to date have depended to a large extent on the labors of Negro service troops in zones of operations. Negroes are still barred from commissions in the Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard. Negro women are barred from the WAVES, Marines and SPARS," concludes Mr. White.

Tuskegee-Trained Unit Bags 17 Planes

News-Birmingham, Ala. 3-17-44

NAPLES—(AP)—The 99th Fighter Squadron, famed All-Negro outfit trained at Tuskegee, Ala., Army Air Field, and stationed in the Italain theater, now has 17 enemy planes to its credit.

"We're just one happy family here and our last name's 99th," said Mr. Sgt. Ellsworth Dansby, Decatur, Ill., line chief for the unit. "We all knew each other in civilian life and we've got a team now that's hard to beat. 3-17-44

Officers of the 99th have moved into a large villa near the field. It was formerly occupied by an Italian doctor, but the officers say it's colder than a tent.

Three new All-Negro squadrons have arrived in Italy to bring to four the total of such outfits, The 99th was the first All-Negro unit of its type and was commanded at the time of its activation by Col. Benjamin O. Davis.

Roberts Of 99th Asks Permanent Army Commission

Daily World
Atlanta, Ga.
2-23-44

CHARLESTON, W. Va.—(ANP)—Major George Spencer Roberts 25 year old commander of the famed all Negro 99th Fighter Squadron, has applied for a permanent commission, said his young wife Friday.

"He's a little shy about public appearances," Mrs. Roberts said, "because so many soldiers seem amazed to see a Negro major—and a 25 year old Negro major at that." 2-23-44

The flier's wife said her husband has no complaints about the army's treatment of his race and that his letters are more about their home and year-old George Jr., whom he has never seen.

The 99th was recently commended by General H. H. Arnold for downing 12 German planes in two days 2-23-44

Negro Squadron Praised By News Units Of London

Daily World - Atlanta, Ga. 1-29-44

Eight Out Of 28 Planes Down Are Credited Fliers

47a

ALGIERS — (SNS) — The famous 99th U. S. Fighter Squadron, all Negro flying unit, which has been in operation in this theatre for several months, was credited with eight of the 28 enemy planes destroyed in dogfights Friday over the Nettuno beachhead.

All three afternoon papers played up the account of how the Negroes, flying Warhawks, bagged eight German planes south of Rome yesterday.

Pilots credited with shooting down planes included 2d Lt. Wilson Eagleson, Bloomington, Ind.; Lt. Robert W. Deiz, Portland, Ore., and Lt. Edward L. Toppis, San Francisco, Cal.

London Papers Hail Exploit.

LONDON, Jan. 28 (AP).—The success of American Negro fighter pilots in Italy was given front page prominence by London newspapers today. All three afternoon papers played up the account of how the Negroes, flying Warhawks, bagged eight German planes south of Rome yesterday.

U.S. NEGRO PILOTS DOWN NAZIS IN NETTUNO BATTLE

ALGIERS, Jan. 28 (AP).—The 99th United States fighter squadron, an

Their Flying Skill Accorded Praise

First Lieutenant Herbert E. Carter of Emory, Miss., is shown giving the details of the day's mission to members of the 99th Fighter Squadron at an airfield somewhere in Italy. Pilots of the 99th have done every type of fighter plane work. They have been providing close support bombing for the British Eighth Army and recently down eight Nazi planes in a single raid. Pictured l to right are 1st Lieutenants Hammond A. Lawson, Marysville, Cal.; William H. Walker, Carbondale, Ill.; Edward T. Driver, Trenton, N. J.; and George T. McCrumby, Fort Worth, Texas. (Photo by U. S. Army Signal Corps.)

While telling about the quiet pride on the pilots' faces when they tell how they removed one more enemy of mankind from this life, Knickerbocker pointed out that one plane doesn't seem very much until you reflect that if every allied fighter pilot had just one enemy plane to his credit, trere would no no German air force. 2-16-44

Few squadron work harder than the 99th. Each individual is flying now an average of one mission a day, and the entire squadron is sharing the work with white squadron and flies three times daily, patrolling the Anzio-Nottuno beachhead so that allied forces below can be, at least protected from air attack while they battle the constantly increasing German forces.

99th's 17 Air Victories

Termed Record By Reporter

Daily World-Atlanta, Ga.

Total Is Unmatched By Any Other Squadron, Knickerbocker Believes

2-16-44

WITH THE U. S. AIR FORCES IN ITALY — (ANP)—While writing about the exploits of the famous 99th Fighter squadron in the second of a series of article this week, H. R. Knickerbocker, white newspaperman, said that the 99th's record of 17 destroyed, four probables and six damaged is thought to be a record ahead of any spuadron.

"Throughout these pilots' accounts of their fighting thereit runs a sign of strong combative spirit," he said. "It doesn't seemto matter what part of the country these boys come from, north or south, their battle attitude is the kind our morale officers like."

Knickerbocker pointed out that boys of the 99th don't need the regular two ounces of whiskey that is given by the medics to make them relax after each mission.

"Nearly all white pilots take it," he said, "but only half the 99th squoaron uses it. A matter of principle. They say they fly better if they don't drink at all."

99th Squadron Knocks Out Tanks

Daily World-Atlanta, Ga.

In Spectacular Fighting In Italy

4-9-44

Fliers Swooped 300 Feet From Ground To Strike

WASHINGTON, D. C. — (SNS) An infantryman, back in this country under the Army's plan after eighteen months' service overseas, related to officials of the War Department today how the Ninety-ninth Fighter Squadron swooped down through a hailfliers. of heavy flak and knocked out three enemy tanks on the Fifth Army front in Italy.

Sergeant William H. Snider, 27, of Baldwin, Maryland, a platoon sergeant in the Third Infantry Division, told the story. He took part in the invasion of North Africa and Sicily, fought in Tunsia and close to Casino, and was recently in action at the Anzio beachhead.

The returned doughboy went through months of combat without being wounded though he spent 21 days in a hospital with sprains of the ankle and hip after an artillery shell landed eight feet from him at Mount Rotondo, Italy.

Sergeant Snider said that the infantry and air corps were working as a close-knit team in the Italian campaign. 4-9-44

"We were helped a lot by the Ninety-ninth Fighter Squadron," he added. "Those colored fighters were the wildest fellows I've ever seen. It didn't make any difference what you wanted — if you asked them, they'd deliver."

Once, Sergeant Snider reported, his outfit was held up during an advance by three enemy tanks, and the Negro support called for help from the

99th Squadron Gives 'FIGHTINGEST' UNITS

1-1-44

NEW YORK—The all-colored 99th Pursuit Squadron is turning in the "fightingest" in the entire United States Army was revealed here Sunday in a delayed United from an American air base somewhere in Italy.

WANT TO STAY IN ARMY

The U.P. reporter declared that their first com- members of the 99th voted unanimously to stick with the Army months ago," after the war. Capt. Rodney Custis, 25, of Hartford, Conn., a United Press re- graduate, crystallized the to 20 of the Nevyard men's attitude by saying: have gone out 1,156 "This has been a great opportunity for us. We knew it when they opened up the Air Force to operating from us in July, 1941, before Pearl Harutes by air from bor. We knew then that we were in support of the an experiment; that the future of Army's drive up the the colored men who thought they should be permitted to fly for their

1,156 "TIMES OUT"

"Since they flew their three tanks, first mission six months porter who talked to 2 gro fliers, "they have g times on patrol, escorting strafing and on ground sorties.

"They are now operating a field eight minutes from the enemy lines in support British Eighth Army's Adriatic coast."

country depended on us.

"We think we've proved ourselves. We've fought in Africa, in Sicily, and now in Italy. We've carried out every assignment given us."

Daring 99th In Italy Ends Year With 236 Missions In 6 Months

Courier-Pittsburg, Pa 1-8-44

ARMY AIR FORCE HEADQUARTERS, NORTH AFRICA—In its six months of operation on this side of the Atlantic, the 99th Fighter Squadron has flown 236 missions of 1,156 sorties (as of December 21, 1943), with the loss of four pilots, two by enemy action, the War Department announced this week. The squadron left the United States April 2, 1943, and, two months later, flew its first combat mission—a bombing raid (skip-bombing) against gun positions on Pantelleria.

FIFTEEN "VETERANS"

Fifteen of the original 28 pilots of the 99th Squadron are still on the job, with nine "veterans" now back in the United States to help train others. Nineteen replacements have come in since September.

Now past the experimental stage, the squadron continues to set speed marks in maintenance, like changing an engine in just over six hours. When the outfit was in the United States, it held the best maintenance record in the Third Air Force for months with a daily average of 85 to 90 per cent of planes flyable.

VERSATILE FIGHTERS

Pilots of the 99th have done every type of fighter plane work, but most of their missions, as at present, have been close support bombing for the British Eighth Army. 1-8-44

Their score against enemy planes: one for certain and several probables.

added their adventures together and decided it was more dangerous to chug along a Sicilian road in a two-and-a-half than to get shot down.

Capt. Clarence C. Jamison, 26, of 2252 E. 85th street, Cleveland, told how he crashed on the Anzio beachhead without getting hurt although the engine of his P-40 was shot out by Focke-Wulfs while he was doing 300 miles an hour at tree-top level.

First Lt. Allen G. Lane, 26, of Demopolis, Ala., described how he also was unhurt when he had to bail out of his P-40 when it caught fire over Anzio.

But First Lt. Thomas E. Malone, 24, of 59 Chandler avenue, Detroit, wasn't so lucky. Never in combat because his duties as an administrative officer with the famous 99th kept him behind the lines, he nevertheless wears a Purple Heart. 5-30-44

These three colored army officers, friends overseas, met in Atlantic City, at the AAF Redistribution station, where they have received new assignments.

"We were in Sicily and moving up to Italy," Lt. Malone said. "I was in the cab of a 2 1-2-ton supply truck when we hit a land mine the German had planted in the road.

"I thought my arm had been torn off and looked for it on the floor of the cab, but my arms were still attached."

Capt. Jamison and Lt. Lane consider themselves 'uckier' than Lt. Malone.

Pilots Concede It's Safer In Air Than On The Ground

Daily World - Atlanta, Ga. 5-30-44

ATLANTIC CITY — (ANP) — Here's how colored fighter-pilots talked about their battle experiences, while resting at AAF Redistribution Station No. 1 in Atlantic City.

Three veterans of the all-colored 99th fighter squadron, formerly the 99th pursuit squadron, does its job on the combat front." The drive was conducted by First Lieut. Bernard S. Proctor of Philadelphia, with the co-operation of First Lieut. Henry M. Letcher of Washington and Major Roberts.

'Spanky' Carries On For The 'Skipper'

New C. O. Of 99th An Efficient Successor To Col. B. O. Davis

Courier-Pittsburg, Pa. 1-8-44

By EDGAR T. ROUZEAU

"Spanky, the destiny of the Squadron is in your hands." With that, Lt. Col. B. O. Davis, Jr., swung aboard a plane at an airfield in southern Sicily. The date, September 2, marked the last the famous 99th Fighter Squadron was to see of its equally famous flying colonel, B. O. (Skipper) Davis.

Capt. George Spencer (Spanky) Roberts, of Fairmont, W. Va., who until that moment had been serving as the squadron's operations officer, stood watching the plane as it roared down the runway and took to the air. When it was finally swallowed by distance, he returned to his tent and into voluntary seclusion.

This writer spent September and October with the squadron, during which time he had many intimate glimpses of the new commander. The squadron moved to a temporary camp at Termini, in Northwest Sicily, where only one mess kitchen was in use and where officers and enlisted men had to stand in the same chow line. Captain Roberts, who always insisted on being served last, frequently reached for a ladle and helped in dishing out food for the enlisted men.

He issued orders that enlisted men be permitted to bring their grievances, if any, direct to the commander, if they so wished. He never went back on his word. As much as he loved a tight bridge game, I have known him to lay down his hand in the midst of a doubled contract in order to listen to trifling matters.

FIND CONFIDENCE IN SELVES

The new C. O. obtains maximum efficiency from his men, particularly squadron executive officers, by packing plenty of responsibility on their shoulders, delegating the necessary authority and then backing them to the hilt. The men seem to like it. In fact, some of them have discovered a new reservoir of confidence in themselves because of this method.

In Sicily, as result of road accidents, the squadron was short on rolling stock. This happened at a time when the Fifth Army, on the move in Italy, had a priority on all rolling stock in Sicily. Captain Roberts was reminded of this fact by a ground officer who thought he might be able to secure replacements for a truck and two jeeps, but certainly not more.

"That won't be enough," Captain Roberts told him. "I want a man who can go to the Air Force people and make them realize our need. Now are you going or do I have to send someone else?"

The officer saluted and took his leave. Four days later he returned to camp with eight jeeps and three trucks, all brand new. When someone asked him how he pulled the miracle, he said, "I told them it was no use sending me back without less because we had to have this many in order to operate with half efficiency." 1-8-44

UNCANNY INSIGHT

Like Colonel Davis, the present squadron commander never asks a fighter-pilot to undertake a risk he would not face himself. He goes on his quota of missions over enemy lines and would gladly take on more if it were advisable. But it isn't advisable because there isn't a pilot in the squadron who doesn't want a full share of the sorties that his outfit sends out.

Captain Roberts has an uncanny insight into the capacity and limitations of every officer and every enlisted man in the squadron. Although most of them do not suspect it, he keeps them under close observation. He shows this intimate knowledge when he is handing out assignments. I never knew him to select the wrong man for a given job.

Captain Roberts was the first member of his race accepted by the Army for aviation training. He was also the first pilot-officer to command the 99th Pursuit Squadron. A lieutenant in those days, he served as C. O. of the fledgling outfit for two-and-a-half months before Colonel Davis took charge.

At the end of October, when I was about to leave the squadron, I decided to touch on what I thought was sacred ground. I wonder to know why Captain Roberts, instead of celebrating his promotion, had gone into seclusion on the day Colonel Davis took leave of the squadron.

"How could I celebrate," he told me. "Actually, I was unhappy. I felt that I had won my promotion at the expense of the squadron. The 99th will never have as fine a commander as Skipper. I hated to see him go." 1-8-44

And that, my friends, is Captain Roberts as I know him. An unselfish officer and a fine commander whose heart and soul is with his squadron.

99th Pledges over $12,000 in Fourth War Loan Drive

Afro-American Baltimore, Md. 2-5-44

By ART CARTER

AFRO War Correspondent with U.S. Troops in Italy

[Copyright. Reproduction in whole or in part expressly forbidden.]

AN ADVANCED AIR BASE IN ITALY (By Cable) — Contributing $1000 for each enemy plane destroyed in the two-day assault against the German Luftwaffe, the 99th Fighter Squadron closed its five-day Fourth War Loan drive with a 100 per cent pledge, the unit's contributions totaling over $12,000.

Individual pledges ranged from $25 to $600, the latter by Maj. George S. Roberts, commanding officer, and first to reach the 100 per cent mark. The Ordnance Detachment, headed by Lieut. James O. Freeman, New York, and the senior flight commander, First Lieut. William R. Thompson, Chicago, armament officer, contributed $500 bonds.

Co-operation was enthusiastic, with the Associated Service Outfit, commanded by Capt. Elmer P. Hall, Jones of Washington, being first to reach the 100 per cent by the enlisted men. The total will increase when the remainder was pledged in locations of units are hope that they "put their shoulder to the wheel and put the same big bang heard in Berlin and Tokyo when the squadron

a message to drive officials, George S. Roberts sent greetings to citizens, expressing the to a full sub-campaign over the top with the available.

Co-operation was enthusiastic, with the Associated Service Outfit, commanded by Capt. Elmer P. Hall, Jones of Washington, being first to reach the 100 per cent by the enlisted men. The total will increase when the remainder was pledged in locations of units are hope that they "put their shoulder to the wheel and put the same big bang heard in Berlin and Tokyo when the squadron

Officers Give $4,175

The officers contributed $4,175 to the Fourth War Loan drive, with 100 per cent participation of total unavailable.

Message to Home Folks

scription

99th. Pursuit Squadron

99th Squadron And Group Pilots Given Key Roles In Allied Drive; Dive Bombing Missions Exciting

Journal + Guide — Norfolk, Va.

5-27-44

By Lem Graves Jr., Journal and Guide War Correspondent

Group's Airmen Help In Two Dangerous Rescues

Journal + Guide
Norfolk, Va.

ADVANCED ALLIED AIR BASE, Italy — (By Radio)— Aerial warriors in the Negro Fighter Group commanded by Lt. Colonel Benjamin O. Davis Jr., have been active recently in providing air cover for naval warships shelling Gaeta and in aiding in two rescues of Allied airmen shot down over water during the current intensive fighting.

Their air cover activities were a continuation of that given earlier to Allied cruisers and destroyers pouring shells into enemy positions ashore. 5-27-44

Aviators from two of the group's squadrons, commanded by 1st Lt. Melvin T. Jackson, Warrenton, Va., and Captain Robert B. Tresville, a West Point graduate, protected the Navy vessels during seven days, until Gaeta Point fell.

ENCOUNTER HEAVY FLAK

During the last day of this patrol assignment they covered minesweepers in the harbor. Considerable enemy anti-aircraft flak was thrown up at them, but Nazi aircraft were not encountered.

In the first of two air-sea rescues Capt. Tresville and Lt. John F. Briggs, St. Louis, Mo., were sent out on May 16 to provide protection for a P-40 fighter pilot whose plane had been knocked down in the sea off Gaeta. There were intense flak and artillery shelling. The latter was so furious that a launch sent out to pick up the pilot was forced to turn back.

PILOT FINALLY SAVED

5-27-44

Captain Tresville and Lt. Briggs, his wingman, were then relieved by 2nd Lt. Dudlem M. Watson, Frankfort, Ky., and Lt. John F. Suggs, Detroit, Mich., attached to Lt. Jackson's squadron, who covered the unfortunate pilot, despite heavy anti-aircraft fire, until he reached shore and was picked up by a British truck.

On May 19 Lieutenants Elmer W. Taylor, Pittsburgh, and James A. Walker, Manning, S. C., covered a similiar air-sea rescue of five members of an Allied bomber's crew who had been forced to bail out of Terracina. 5-27-44

They patroled the area for a half hour until a "Walrus" (rescue seaplane) took the bomber crewmen abard. Heavy flak was thrown up at the intrepid airmen all during the rescue operations.

FLIGHT SURGEONS

Captain Harry Anderson, Indianapolis, Ind.; Bascomb S. Waugh, Camden, N. J.; and Arnold H. Meloney, Washington, D. C., attached respectively to the squadrons commanded by Captain Tresville, Captain Lee Rayford of Washington, and Lt. Jackson, were authorized recently to wear flight surgeon's wings as a result of their overseas services.

They had previously been known as flight surgeons, since it is common practice to identify flight examiners that way overseas. Official authorization of their designation as flight surgeons was made the first week in May.

Major Vance H. Marshbanks, Los Angeles, Cal., got his flight surgeon authorization, effective January 1, as a result of a year's service as a flight examiner. He is the group flight surgeon.

SELDEN AGAIN FIGHTER PILOT

2nd Lt. Wiley A. Selden Jr., Norfolk, Va., has again been transferred from a new service group with which he served as a test pilot (one of the first four Negro test pilots in the Air Forces) to the 99th Fighter Squadron as a fighter pilot.

(Early in the year he had been transferred to a fighter squadron, then early in April he was returned to the service group as technical supply officer under Captain Elmer Jones of Washington, D. C., who was made commanding officer of the service group after being overseas for nearly a year as commander of a service detachment with the 99th Fighter Squadron—Editor). 5-27-44

Lt. Colonel William L. Kimball, area controller, who flies occasionally with the group's pilots and keeps his plane on Lt. Jackson's line, told this reporter this week that the flying pilots of the group were good, although their missions so far have been largely routine.

47a-1944

99th Pursuit Squadron

99th Squadron Ends 1st Year Overseas

Call—Kansas City, Mo

Fighter Pilots Credited With 409 Missions

5-5-44

BY ART CARTER
(War Correspondent in Italy)

ADVANCED AIR BASE, Italy. (By Cable)— An inspection tour by Lt. General Ira C. Baker was the spotlight of the week's activity around the air units in Italy as the pioneer squadron continued its dive-bombing missions against targets, and the fighter group maintained its steady routine of costal protection for convoys.

Lt. General Baker, commander of the Mediterranean Allied Air Force, lunched with Lt. Col. Benjamin O. Davis Jr., and his fighter group headquarters staff, inspected two squadrons at the group's main airdrome, then visited the pioneer squadron.

At the latter he was welcomed by Captain Erwin B. Lawrence, commanding officer who recently replaced Major George Spencer Roberts, now on leave.

The general made an informal talk to the pilots. They were grouped around on sloping greens adjacent to the field operations tent as the general chatted in a brotherly-like fashion on air activity in this theater, paying particular attention to the part played by the squadron. He had special praise for the pioneer unit's outstanding work on the Anzio beachhead, twice lauding the outfit during his 15-minute talk for their 16 victories in 10 days of intense beachhead patrol missions.

He also indicated that a big job awaited them in the allied battle against the enemy. 5-5-44

The general was accompanied on his visit to the pioneer squadron by Lt. Col. Davis, the first overseas commander of the unit, and Lt. Col. Beauford E. Buchanon, fighter wing executive officer.

At the fighter group's camp, the general ate a GI steak dinner prepared by Sgt. Carl Brown of Brooklyn, N. Y., and met the commanding officers of two squadrons, Captain Robert B. Tresville Jr., and 1st Lt. Edward Creston Gleed of Lawrence, Kas. He also inspected the area and talked with a group of pilots from each unit and inspected the enlisted personnel. 5-5-44

At both camps the occasion provided a photographic picnic for enlisted men who "snapped" pictures from all angles.

Along operational lines, the pioneer squadron closed its first year overseas last Monday, with 409 missions, and 2,644 sorties to its credit, handling two dive-bombing missions against gun positions in the Cassino area on the anniversary date.

Lt. John Daniels of Harvey, Ill., was forced to land his flak-riddled plane at an emergency strip south of Cassino, after the ship's cooling system was wrecked by enemy flak-ack on a dive run. It was Daniels' first experience of the kind, although his plane has been hit four times previously. He escaped unharmed and returned to the base three hours later.

Week-end activity also saw 2nd Lt. Floyd A. Thompson of London, W. Va., one of the recent 10 replacements, get two sorties. On his initial mission, Thompson declared, "It was the first time we had to fly formation and weave to dodge flak at the same time, but the weaving becomes automatic when you see those flak burst." 5-5-44

Awards at the pioneer squadron included Oak Leaf clusters for meritorious achievement against the enemy to three fighter pilots for the second time, and to four for the first time. Those receiving their second clusters were: Major George S. Roberts, Captains L. Rodney Curtis, and Leon C. Roberts, First Lts. Willie Ashley, Willie H. Fuller, James B. Knighten, Allen E. Glenn, and Samuel M. Bruce, the latter awarded posthumously. Initial awards went to Captains Herbert E. Carter and Edwin B. Lawrence, First Lts. Edward S. Toppin, and Howard L. Baugh. Six of the men named for awards are already en route to the United States on rest or reassignment. 5-5-44

First Lt. Robert Montgomery, 27, of Lima, Ohio, was transferred from a quartermaster company to the squadron as supply and transportation officer, replacing First Lt. Benote Wimp of Chicago who was reassigned because of illness. Montgomery has been in the army nine years.

The anniversary last Monday was celebrated with an informal supper in which the officers and enlisted men gathered to recall early days. Food was strictly GI, but was topped off with ice cream and a cake baked by the squadron's efficient cooks who do an excellent job of keeping the men well-fed. 5-5-44

The night was celebrated in a definite warlike manner as Jerry paid a visit with an air raid. Although none of the squadron's men were injured, members received countless scares as parachute flares lighted up the area and sent the men scurrying to foxholes and scampering to cover for safety.

Alternating its action from daily coastal patrol, the fighter squadron commanded by Capt. Robert B. Tresville, Monday, tackled its first ground strafing mission, attacking enemy gun positions at Circeo.

Taking off at dawn, the flight, led by Tresville, swooped over German-held territory and inflicted damage on motor transports and gun installations. Returning pilots, including 1st Lts. Spurgeon Ellington, Winston Salem, N. C.; Jack Holsclow, Spokane, Wash.; Carroll Woods, Valdosta, Ga., reported good results in the mission, although poor visibility prevented accurate accounts.

On another field, P-39 pilots witnessed an exciting landing by 2nd Lt. Leonard F. Turner of Washington, who skidded into a gulley on landing, but escaped without damage. 5-5-44

The Naples area experienced an attack from Germans, Monday night as from 30 to 40 enemy aircraft dropped bombs.

The elevation of 1st Lt. Melvin T. Jackson of Olney, Md., from flight leader in the squadron command by Tresville, to command by 1st Lt. Edward Crestona Gleed highlighted the 13 promotions in the group.

Gleed, nephew of Fred Gleed of Kansas City, for eight months in the chief's spot, was transferred to the squadron headed by Captain Lee Rayford.

The leading promotion in the headquarters staff was the elevation of 1st Lt. Mac Ross of Dayton, Ohio, to captain. Ross, group operations officer, was the ranking lieutenant, having held this position for 16 months. He was one of the five pilots in the first Tuskegee class. His wife is a second lieutenant, a nurse at the staff hospital. 5-5-44

Other promotions, all from second to first lieutenant, include Elmer L. Gordon, Portsmouth, Va., engineer; Charles E. McGee, Champaign, Ill.; Charles M. Bushey, Los Angeles; James U. Walker, Manning, S. C.; in Lt. Jackson's squadron.

Norris M. Hatchett, Bridgeport, Conn., public relations officer; Robert L. King, Newark, N. J., communications officer; Marshall Caviness, Gastonia, N. C., engineering officer; Lawrence Dooley, Cleveland, ordnance officer; James M. McFatridge, Huntington, W. Va., armament officer; Maurice B. Peters, Webster City, Iowa, and Walter F. Foreman, Washington, in Capt. Rayford's squadron. Milledge J. Mosby, Durham, N. C. adjutant, in Captain Tresville's unit. 5-5-44

Lt. Leonard Jackson the Only Texas Pilot in 99th

AFRO-AMERICAN — Balt. Md.

Fifteen Enlisted Members of Ground Crew Make Up Complement of the Lone Star State

5-27-44

By ART CARTER

AFRO War Correspondent with U.S. Troops in Italy

[Copyright. Reproduction in whole or in part expressly forbidden.]

ADVANCED AIRBASE IN ITALY (By Air Mail, Delayed) — Second Lt. Leonard W. Jackson, Fort Worth, Texas, holds the distinction of being the only Texas pilot now flying in the pioneer 99th Fighter Squadron, but the Lone Star State has fifteen other representatives among its enlisted personnel.

Lieutenant Jackson, with over eighty sorties to his credit, is looking forward to the day that he will be eligible for reassignment to the States.

If and when he does get such a break, however, Texas need have no fear of losing any distinction that its sons have made in helping to establish the squadron enviable record in this theater, for the enlisted men handling multiple duties in the fighter squadron's daily missions, do so proudly and efficiently.

Smiling T/Sgt. Tommy Downs, of Sequin, armament line chief, typifies the Texans' spirit in the unit. He, like others in the outfit, loves his work and does it like any other 3-year army veteran would.

Another Sequin soldier is S/Sgt. Vernon Watson, a mechanic, while the lone Houston color-bearer is S/Sgt. Waddell Steward, an assistant flight crew mechanic.

San Antonio's gifts to the sqaudron are S/Sgt. Jesse R. Ramsey, mechanic; Sgt. Nathan Swift, radio communication flight chief; and Cpl. Fred Minor, also of the radio communications' section.

Three from Dallas

Three Dallas youths with the unit are Sgt. Hiram Harding, of the intelligence department, Sgt. Roland Robert Roullette, supply, and Sgt. Eddie Phillips, service detachment.

Sgt. Adra Norman, Waco, works as propellor specialist in the service detachment and Sgt. James Williams, mechanic, hails from Lonquien. 5-27-44

Two with Same Address

S/Sgt. Earl Dillard, assistant technical inspector, and Sgt. Leslie Devall of the service detachment, Marshall's two representatives, live at the same address there.

Cpl. William Simpson of Victoria, and S/Sgt. Charles Searcy, electrical specialist of Austin, complete the Texas contingent. If anybody wants to talk about their State's contribution to the war, the gang will be found ready and willing.

Returned 99th Fliers At Atlantic City

Informer — Houston, Texas 7-8-44

ATLANTIC CITY. —(ANP)— The dizzy pace which Capt. Chas. Hall and Lt. Jimmie Ashley have been going since their return to the states slackened a trifle when they arrived at Redistribution station No. 1 here at Atlantic City last week. Visits to the home folk which for Capt. Hall was at Brazil and Terre Haute, Ind., and for Jimmie Ashley at Sumter, S. C., were sandwiched in between trips to Chicago and New York. Both plan to visit Tuskegee Air Field but have not had an opportunity yet.

Here the two fliers are stopping at the Ritz-Carlton where $50 a day for a room was a minimum not so long ago. Known as returned officers they will rest amid the most luxurious surroundings, undergo complete physical examinations and then be reclassified and returned to duty.

The air corps has decreed that after a certain number of missions and sorties fliers must take this vacation to recuperate from the terrific strain under which they have labored and to determine whether they should be returned to the front or assigned here at home.

Overseas Again; Four Left At Base

7-7-44

Seventeen Transferred From Tuskegee

Special to Journal and Guide

TUSKEGEE, Ala. — Fourteen veteran pilots of the 99th Fighter Squadron and the 332nd Fighter Group recently returned to this country after completing their combat tours in Italy have

May Be Sent

been shuffled off to an Army Air Field in Douglas, Ariz., to become twin engine medium bomber pilots.

Three others have been sent to an instrument school in Texas for further training in that specialty before reassignment to either the Army Air Field here or the 477th Bombardment Group to which the other fourteen pilots will be assigned after their transition training in Arizona.

On Nov. 24, there were 21 of these Negro heroes at the Tuskegee base. Next day there were only four left—Captains Herbert E. Carter, Amory, Miss.; Charles B. Hall, Brazil, Ind., and Lts. Price D. Rice, Montclair, N. J., and Willie E. Fuller, Tarboro, N. C.

The fourteen who are to become bomber pilots are Captains John W. Rogers, Chicago; Lemuel E. Custis, Hartford, Conn.; James T. Wiley, Pittsburgh; Clarence C. Jamison, Cleveland, Ohio, and Lts. George R. Bolling, Phoebus, Va.; James B. Knighten, Tulsa, Okla.; Allen G. Lane, Demopolis, Ala.; George A. Taylor, Washington, D. C.; Charles DeBow, Indianapolis, Ind.; Willie Ashley, Sumter, S. C.; Robert O'Neil, Detroit; Frank Walker; Clinton B. Mills, Durham, N. C.; and John A. Gibson, Chicago.

SEEN IN WASHINGTON

Easterners recently got their first view of a group of veterans of aerial combat at Washington, D. C., on Nov. 11 when 13 of these pilots flew to the nation's capital as a feature at the game between Morgan College and the Tuskegee Army Air Field Warhawks. Speculation has been general that these men who have won their spurs fighting the Nazi "master race" in the skies over Europe and earned their right to a trip home by completing in most cases more than 70 combat missions, would be made a part of the training program for younger pilots at Tuskegee and the fighter pilot training base at Walterboro, S C.

MAY RETURN OVERSEAS

The assignment of these men to the 477th Bombardment Group is understood to be, in informed quarters, a preliminary step to their reassignment to an overseas theatre of war.

The group flying B-25 Mitchells has been in training now for more than a year and is expected to be committed to combat soon.

The three fliers who will attend instrument school in Texas are Lt. Clarence Allen, Chicago; Capt. Elwood T. Driver, Trenton, N. J., and Lt. Robert W. Deiz, Portland, Ore.

Lt. Taylor was grounded in Italy because of an ear injury and was to have had it treated when he got back into this country. So far no medical treatment has been given him. Lt Walker was sent home for treatment of burns about the face and hands which he received when his plane crashed but his assignment to the bombardment group apparently interrupts those plans.

Lt. O'Neil was shot down over France and was finally brought back through enemy lines to Allied territory by the French Forces of the Interior (FFI). Under International Law he cannot fight again in the European theatre. If he is given another assignment presumably it will have to be in the Pacific theatre.

Lt. Rice, it has been learned, was originally in the group sent to Arizona but he was grounded because of a sinus condition which caused him to be sent home from the overseas theatre and his place was taken by Capt. Hall. At the last minute, however, Hall's name was scratched from the list and he will remain with the others at Tuskegee. Hall is perhaps the best known of the fighter pilots after Col. B. O. Davis Jr.

FOUR AT WALTERBORO

Only four of the more than two dozen veterans who have returned to the States are now actively engaged in the training program for fighter pilots. They are Lts. Walter I. Lawson, Newtown, Va.; Graham Smith, Ahoskie, N. C.; Spann Watson, Hackensack, N. J., and Charleston W. Dryden, New York City, instructors in the 553rd Fighter Squadron at Walterboro.

99th Destroys Hundred Trucks

By ART CARTER

AFRO War Correspondent with U.S. Troops in Italy

[Copyright. Reproduction in whole or in part expressly forbidden.]

ADVANCED AIR BASE IN ITALY (By Cable, Censored) — Operating literally on the enemy's doorstep, the pioneer 99th Fighter Squadron continued to prove a constant headache to the Germans during a whirl of aerial activity over the week end, pounding roadways, bridges and gun emplacements south of Rome.

With the week's campaign marked by the junction of Allied forces advancing up the coastal route with the Anzio beachhead warriors, P-40 warhawk pilots working in direct support of the ground forces destroyed over a hundred enemy vehicles, damaged another forty trucks, demolished two gun targets and scored three direct hits on German command posts.

Day and Night Duty

Keeping an around-the-clock vigil over the roadways in conjunction with other fighter-bomber squadrons, the veteran dive bombers piled up vehicles along the enemy's rear, trapping traffic headed northward on Highways 6 and 7.

Also many trucks were bagged along the lateral highways, the biggest bags being 35 and 25 on respective single missions led by First Lts. Herman Lawson and Howad L. Baugh.

Pilots returning to the base described the devastation as a "pilots' picnic," told how they bombed the front of convoys, blocking the roads, then made sweep after sweep on the jammed-up vehicles.

Nazi Drivers Frantic

Some German drivers would dive out of the trucks rather than be caught in the blazing fire, while others swerved into ditches to avoid the rain of death.

Lieutenant Baugh, whose home is in Petersburg, Va., led a flight of eight planes on Friday which knocked out twenty-five or more transports. Relating details of his 102nd sortie, Baugh asserted:

"We caught vehicles moving east on Highway 6 and dropped six bombs on them, besides going back to strafe. One bomb hit a truck in the center, smashing it to bits, and fire flared up everywhere."

Destruction Recognized

Tactical reconnaisance observers reported 25-plus motor transports destroyed, in its commendation report to the squadron.

Other pilots on the mission included: Lts. George Gray of Welch, W.Va.; Clarence B. Mills, Durham, N.C.; Heber Houston, Detroit; George R. Bolling, Phoebus, Va.; Clarence W. Dart, Elmira, N.Y.; James B. Brown, Los Angeles; and William Allsbrook, Kansas City, Kan.

35 Vehicles Wrecked

Lieutenant Lawson, of Marysville, Cal., led the flight which destroyed thirty-five vehicles the previous day. Lieutenant Gray discovered the vehicles on the roadway and radioed Lawson, who gave him permission to lead the way to the target. The others followed him down to the "deck," where they strafed the vehicles, leaving them aflame.

Lt. Edward L. Toppins, of Los Angeles, flying his 100th mission, spearheaded another flight which scattered thirty vehicles along a macadam stretch as the retreating enemy attempted to move out supplies. Six trucks were destroyed and four others damaged.

Command Posts Hit

Monday's operations involved two German command posts, pinpoint targets for which pilots were carefully briefed. Two direct hits were scored on each, putting "the Krauts on the run."

Captain Leon C. Roberts registered a hit on the roof of one building while other bombs dropped in close proximity.

First Lt. Robert W. Deiz skip-bombed to silence a German gun firing from atop a building in Fiuggi, while another large gun near Sora was reported destroyed.

Flak Is Troublesome

Enemy fighter resistance was non-existent during the week's domination, but flak caused pilots many distressful moments. Deiz's ship was twice hit during his skip-bombing run, while the ammunition boss of the plane flown by First Lt. Lewis C. Smith of Los Angeles was hit, setting a wing afire. He landed at an emergency field without further trouble and was unharmed.

The most spectacular return from the flak volley, however, was accomplished by Second Lt. Alva Temple, 26, of Carrollton, Ala., who brought his ship back with its elevator controls and trim tabs completely shot out.

Crew Chief Amazed

S/Sgt. Steenie C. Hall of Norristown, Pa., Temple's crew chief, declared: "I have never seen a ship come back in such shape before. What's more, Lieutenant Temple flew it back in perfect formation and made a wheel landing."

Temple added, "It was rugged running all the way. I wonder how I did it. The elevator control jammed and I had no control of the stick."

Temple's plane was also sieved in the wings, with one hole only three inches from the gas tank.

Get New Flight Surgeon

Every available pilot participated in the week end's intensive missions, with Lts. Albert Manning of Hartsville, S.C., and John Daniels of Chicago being among the flight leaders. A majority of the targets were in the towns of Acato, Alatri and Frosinone, the latter a town where bitter fighing has been waged for the past two days, with close support work materially aiding every Allied advance.

Capt. Maurice Johnson, of Washington, D.C., the squadron's flight surgeon, left for the States for reassignment. He was replaced by Capt. William Allen of Columbus, Ohio, formerly with a service group. The new flight surgeon is a graduate of Ohio State University and Meharry Medical College.

SEE FLIERS HIT TARGET AT CASSINO

By OLLIE HARRINGTON
(Courier War Correspondent)

AN ADVANCED AIR BASE, Italy—(Via Wireless)—Walter White, national secretary of the NAACP and temporarily on leave of absence, who is serving as a war correspondent for the New York Post, Life magazine, and several colored publications, concluded his recent tour of the Italian Theatre of Operations.

While engaged on one of his visitations, I was asked by Mr. White to accompany him to several front-line "hot spots" where colored troops were seeing service.

Among those areas of action visited were Cassino and Valletri.

DIVE 4,000 FEET

Within two miles of the battered town of Cassino and some four miles beyond our assigned position, we witnessed the thrilling spectacle of a dive-bombing attack by elements of the 99th Fighter Squadron.

From our position behind an ancient stone fence overlooking the town, we watched the red-nosed Warhawks of the squadron dive in from 4,000 feet, release their bombs and climb straight up through the great black clouds of smoke which were rolling from the target.

Enemy shells began falling uncomfortably near our vantage point, and we were forced to abandon it.

MAJOR ROBERTS REPORTS ON RAID

Later that same evening, Major "Spanky" Roberts, commander of the 99th, described to us in the squadron's clubrooms, how the raid by his boys pulverized a great deal of the Germans' position in the target area. When the day's work was finished and the last of his P-40's had roared safely home, the Nazis had been driven out of all points in the town except a small corner, by the tough New Zealanders.

During his brief visit here, Mr. White discussed with officials of the Red Cross, policies affecting colored troops.

Among those in attendance were: Sidney Williams, Cleveland, Ohio; Evelyn Vaughn, New York, and Sara Johnson, Boston.

Continuing, the guest speaker stated that there was an ever-increasing number of Americans of all races who were determined that the gains of the armies of democracy and freedom in this theatre of action would be extended and maintained at home.

Mr. White left Italy for Algiers. He is also scheduled to travel to Brazzaville to interview Felix Eboue', head of French Equatorial Africa and a firm supporter of the democracies since Munich and the early days of confusion and indecision.

Further stops have been planned for Liberia, Nigeria, Brazil, and the Caribbean area.

99th Pursuit Squadron

99th Fighters, Wives Reunited in Atlantic City

Three former members of the 99th Fighter squadron, recently returned from Italy, hold a reunion on the boardwalk in Atlantic City, N. J.

Left to right:-First Lieut. and Mrs. Allen G. Lane, Demopolis, Ala.; First Lieut. Thomas N. Malone, Detroit, administrative officer with the 99th, and Capt. and Mrs. Clarence C. Jamison, Cleveland.

Capt. Jamison and Lieut. Lane are P-40 pilots.

The officers are stationed at the army air forces redistribution station No. 1, where they are being "screened" for new assignments. (U. S. Army Signal Corps photo.)

Negro Flying Officers Cite Records Of Men

Advertiser
Montgomery, Ala.

NEW YORK, June 25.—(AP)—Two captains in the negro 99th Fighter Squadron today cited the unit's record at Anzio beachhead as evidence, they said, that members of their race can "more than qualify" as military aviators.

Capt. Lamuel R. Curtis, who in civilian life was the only negro member of the Hartford, Conn., police department, said in an interview at army public relations headquarters: 6-26-44

"When the 99th first went over in April, 1943, the general impression was that it was an experiment. Now I think the record shows it was a successful experiment."

Capt. Charles B. Hall, of Brazil, Indiana, Distinguished Flying Cross wearer, who bagged four of 17 planes credited to the squadron in Mediterranean theater operations, said he was interested in what "opportunities negroes will have after the war."

Expressing a desire to stay in military aviation, Hall said: "I believe the negro is vitally concerned with what postwar conditions will be. There are so many negroes in far-flung corners of the earth who are getting a new slant on things." 6-26-44

Both men trained for the air force at the Tuskegee, Ala., training school.

99th Flyers Back From Overseas, Relate Experiences

Daily World
Atlanta, Ga.
5-21-44

ATLANTIC CITY — (ANP) — Here's how colored fighter-pilots talked about their battle experiences, while resting at AAF Redistribution Station No. 1 in Atlantic City.

Three veterans of the all-colored 99th fighter squadron, formerly the 99th pursuit squadron, added their adventures together and decided it was more dangerous to chug along a Sicilian road in a two-and-a-half than to get shot down.

Capt. Clarence C. Jamison, 26, of 2252 E. 85th street, Cleveland told how he crashed on the Anzio beachhead without getting hurt although the engine of his P-40 was shot out by Focke Wulfs while he was doing 300 miles an hour at tree-top level.

First Lt. Allen G. Lane, 26, of Demopolis, Ala., described how he also was unhurt when he had to bail out of his P-40 when it caught fire over Anzio.

But First Lt. Thomas E. Malone, 24, of 59 Chandler avenue, Detroit ,wasn't so lucky. Never in combat because his duties as an administrative officer with the famous 99th kept him behind the lines, he nevertheless wears a Purple Heart. 5-21-44

These three colored army officers, friends overseas, met in Atlantic City, at the AAF Redistribution station, where they have received new assignments.

"We were in Sicily and moving up to Italy," Lt. Malone said. "I was in the cab of a 2 1-2-ton supply truck when we hit a land mine the German had planted in the road.

"I thought my arm had been torn off and looked for it on the floor of the cab, but my arms were still attached."

Capt. Jamison and Lt. Lane consider themselves luckier than Lt. Malone.

T. W. Young
Journal and Guide

Tells College Of Fliers

Norfolk, Virginia
2-12-44

TUSKEGEE, Ala.—Speaking at what he called the birthplace of the 99th Fighter Squadron, now engaged in fighting in Italy, Thomas W. Young, war correspondent of the Journal and Guide of Norfolk, Va., at vesper service in the Tuskegee Institute Chapel here Sunday, said "whatever credit comes to this unit, Tuskegee Institute will certainly enjoy a large measure of it.

Mr. Young, who only recently returned from the Mediterranean, where he has been serving as war correspondent since last April made specific reference to Lieut. William A Campbell who had the distinction of being the first Negro in history to drop a bomb from the air on enemy installations.

ATHLETIC STAR

Campbell, former football, basketball, and tennis star at Tuskegee Institute, was selected, along with Capt. Charles B. Hall, Brazil, Ind., by his commanding officer, Young said, to participate in the first combat mission assigned to this pioneer Air Corps group.

The target of this mission, the speaker added, was the Italian island base of Pantelleria. Ultimately, that Nazi stronghold surrendered after merciless pounding by American Air Forces, thus establishing the theory that an enemy objective could be whipped into submission by the application of air power alone. The 99th shared in that historic triumph, Young declared.

"It was a momentous occasion for all of us there. Could our boys make the grade?" Young said they all wondered. "But when Campbell and Hall returned to our field with a story of a difficult job well done, there was joy and confidence all around. The Negro fighter pilot had passed his first test with flying colors."

HUMOROUS END

The incident was not without its humor, the speaker added. Campbell whose plain love for flying had piled up the biggest log of flying time of any of the pilots in the squadron, had never had an accident with a plane. But, after participating in the unit's first combat, he came home safely landed and then proceeded calmly to taxi his airplane into a bomb crater which he couldn't see in front of him.

Other pilots who went to school at Tuskegee before joining the Air Corps, and who helped to build up the 99th Fighter Squadron's excellent record overseas are First Lieutenant Leon C. Roberts, Prichard, Ala.; Herbert V. Clark, Little Rock, Ark.; Herbert Eugene Carter, Amory, Miss.; Allen G. Lane, Demopolis, Ala.; Edwin B. Lawrence, Cleveland, Ohio; and Willie E. Fuller, Tarboro, N. C.

Roberts was one of the ten pilots who scored a sensational victory two weeks ago by shooting down twelve German planes in two days, Young pointed out.

On Tuesday Young addressed the current graduating class of fighter pilots, challenging them to carry on the work of their predecessors when the time for valor should come.

London Papers Praise Nazi-Busting 99th

People's Voice - New York, N.Y.
2-5-44

Ninety-ninth Warhawk Squadron fliers operating under the newly formed Mediterranean Allied Air Forces, sent 12 German planes rocketing to the ground in the Anzio beachhead below Rome last Thursday and Friday, and piled up the biggest score the unit has made since it entered combat territory last spring.

Captain Rodney Custis of Hartford, Conn., 99th fighter pilots slapped eight Nazi-driven Focke-Wulfs out of the sky Thursday, when the total of four the second. These were wiped out two enemy planes one "sure" scores; there were several "probables." In Thursday's free-for-all one 99th pilot chased a number downed by all Allied planes was 50.

The 99th snarled and scrapped and finally blew the German to its way through several dog fights Thursday and Friday, silencing eight Germans the first day, and which one pilot, Capt. Charles Hall, Jr., of Brazil, Ind., knocked down two in one fight.

Other than Captain Custis and Capt. Hall pilots mentioned in the before actual news dispatches were: First Lieut-

enants obert Deiz, Portland, Oregon; William Ashley, Sumter, S. C.; Leon Roberts, Pritchard, Alabama; and Edward Toppis, San Francisco; Second Lieutenant Charles Bailey, Punta Gorda, Florida, and Wilson Eagleston, Bloomington, Indiana.

The question that has been going the rounds here since the world was informed via radio of the air prowess of the 99th, is whether or not newsreel shots of the Tuskegee trained airmen will now be recorded and released for theatre consumption by the American public? It is a well-known fact that shots of the squadron—even though not in action, would boost morale 350 per cent.

DC Pilot in 99th on First Mission

Afro-American-Baltimore, Md
2-19-44

BY ART CARTER

AFRO War Correspondent with U.S. Troops in Italy

[Copyright. Reproduction in whole or in part expressly forbidden.]

ADVANCED AIR BASE (By Mail, Censored)—"It was just like the practice dives except for the bursting of flak all around my plane."

That, in brief, is the way Second Lieut. Alwayne M. Dunlap, 23-year-old pilot, of 324 G Street, Northeast, Washington, described his first bombing mission over the enemy lines.

Dunlap, flying the wing of Major George Spencer Roberts, commanding officer of the Ninety-Ninth Fighter Squadron, continued: "Of course, I was nervous, but more because I was cognizant of it being my first mission and my desire to make good than of what I expected to face in the way of flak.

Engine Stalled

"I saw the bluish smoke bursts in front of me, approximately ten of them, but luckily none hit my plane."

A brief scare was given Dunlap after he made his bomb run as the ship's engine stalled momentarily, but "I gave it the hot air and it went away speeding," he joyously recalled.

The Washington pilot's initial mission was like a substitute taking the star athlete's spot in the line-up but he came through with flying colors, and with increased activity anticipated for the squadron in the impending invasion plans, he looks forward to probable daily sorties with the veterans of the all-colored flying unit.

"Apprehension over formation rather than flak worried me as I took off," Dunlap confessed, adding, "now that the first mission is over I shall have no fear.

The youthful pilot, Arm-High and Miner Teachers' College graduate (the latter 1942), declared concussion from the enemy ack ack fire caused his plane to bounce around as if it had encountered an air pocket.

The mission for the day involved the bombing of gun positions across the enemy lines and strafing motor transports, which the pilots did with both guns blasting away.

11 Bombs Hit Target

Success of the mission was highly evident, the squadron receiving telephonic commendation from front line observers upon its return to the base. Operational reports revealed that eleven bombs fell in the target area and black smoke was observed rising to 1,500 feet as pilots left the enemy territory. 2-19-44

Major Roberts was flight leader on the particular mission, with other pilots, besides Dunlap, being Lieuts. Herbert E. Carter, Lewis C. Smith, Allen G. Lane, Henry B. Perry, Clinton B. Mills, Charles Bailey, Price D. Rice, Edward L. Toppins, Leonard Jackson, and Captain B. Hall.

After the flight reached the target area, Dunlap declared: "Flak broke out, and I began kicking rudder. It exploded above me and below me, rocking the plane from the concussions. I could see puffs of bluish white smoke above and behind my wings.

"The signal for the bomb run was given and I followed my element leader down. After he dropped his bomb I gave a burst of fire from the six 50-calibre guns, levelled out and dropped my bomb. We got home safely, and boy, I really ate a hearty meal."

Dunlap is the only Washington pilot with the Fighter Squadron. He began cadet training in August, 1942, shortly after graduation from Miner and was graduated from Tuskegee Army Flying School in March, 1943. 2-19-44

Weather conditions hampered immediate combat training with the squardron, but patiently he waited for his initial mission call and now that it is over he is ready

He underwent gunnery training and combat training at Selfridge Field and left for overseas September 27, last, joining the squadron in October at Barcelona, Sicily.

The 99th Convinces The Skeptics

Journal + Guide
Norfolk, Va. 2-5-44

THE SPLENDID achievement of the famous 99th Fighter Squad-ron, pioneering aviation combat unit of Negroes in the Americanarmed services, in the fierce sky battles that began last weekendjust south of Rome, is a significantdevelopment. When the fighterpilots went into combat last June 2,the Allies were just beginning to get air mastery in the Mediterraneanarea. They were assigned a keyrole in the subduing of Pantelleria and other nearby island objectivesvirtually by air power alone, thenhelped provide air cover for theSicilian invasion and campaign—meanwhile moving their base fromNorth Africa to Sicily, then to Italyitself.

Their assignments included bombing missions, bomber escorting, and strafing of enemy troopsand ground installations. For awhile the Germans and Italians offered aerial resistance, then the Italians surrendered and Germanair resistance petered out. Our airmen almost had the skies to themselves.

Before this, however, came the day—July 2—in which the 99thearned its first confirmed air victoryover a German plane, along withseveral "probables" and damagedplanes, and its first losses by enemyaction. There has since been concern in some quarters over the squadron's not compiling an additional list of air victories, and during this period of seeming inaction came an article in a national news-magazine hinting strongly that the99th had done less than it might.

———

The record of the unit in the past few days, however, is proof of an irrefutable nature that the concern and the innuendoes were premature. The simple fact is that whenthe enemy refuses to come up andfight, you cannot shoot him down.You do what is the job to be done,unspectacular as it might seem.That job for the 99th was to reconnoiter, bomb, and strafe. The99th did this well. That is in therecords and in the eyewitness reports of war correspondents.

One of these correspondents, the Guide's Thomas W. Young, was with the airmen from the momentthey left American shores, throughtheir advanced combat training inMorocco, their committment tocombat from Tunisia, during theirinvasion of Sicily, and for most oftheir operations from Sicilian bases.As far back as last mid-summer hewrote a carefully documented dispatch setting forth that the "experimental" stage of the first Negro fighter squadron was a success2-5-44 and that the battles now raging on and just south of Rome beachhead confirm that expression of faith. The battles and the aviators' heroic roles in them prove that they merited further opportunity to till needed a keyprove their mettle.

During Thursday's big day, while operating with other "hot" squadrons, the 99th bagged the largest number of Nazis of any other single squadron. And they were flying the P-40 Warhawk, admittedly not the best nor fastest weapon with which to tackle the deadly German Focke-Wulf 190's and Messerschmitt 109's. Some of their comrades in arms were flying the great British Spitfire plane.

———

Dispatches from overseas speak of the end of some white officers' skepticism about the Negro pilots. These Doubting Thomases are now convinced that America can put complete faith in these black eagles. It is also a bitter dose for Hitler, who has arrogantly classed Negroes with apes. His propagandists will now probably explain that the 99th's fighters are just sun-tanned Nordics!

The War Department some months ago launched a broadened program of training of Negroes in the Air Forces, and bomber pilots, navigators, bombardiers, and gunners are now undergoing instruction. Previously, it had formed a fighter group (three squadrons) and placed it under the command of battle-proved Lt. Col. B. O. Davis Jr., first commander of the 99th.

These things were done as a step toward greater justice for and more integration of the Negro in the armed forces. The 99th has still further proved the military soundness of this program. But no one should have been surprised. Black Americans have shown their courage on land, on sea, and in the air—from Bunker Hill to Guadalcanal. It simply is a part of our lot to remind the skeptics during each war.

2-5-44

99TH COMES THROUGH

Whenever Negroes battle through the stormy sea and rocky cliffs of racial discrimination, obstacles, and prejudice, and arrive at some worthy point of destination in spite of limited opportunities and difficulties, there is cause for quiet satisfaction and inspiration. This is especially true for Negroes in general and Negro youth in particular. Negro youth need and must have inspiration that they achieve in spite of the handicaps which face them on account of race and color. No better inspiration exists than the recurring proof that other Negroes have scaled the walls of racial and color disadvantage, and reached a goal of worthy achievement, measured by the standards of measurement which apply to those who have no such walls to climb.

Informer-Houston, Texas
3-4-44

An inspiration like this is to be found in the recent news that the 99th Fighter Squadron has come through to a position of glorious achievementin the United States Army Air Forces. The squadron was officially commended by General Arnold, and Time magazine says that "any outfit would have been proud of the record." If Major George Spencer Roberts, commander of the squadron, and his men can hang up such a record in spite of race and color, what could they do if they had had the chances which were open to other races in the American armed forces?

'99th' Hero Gets Special Service

Peoples Voice—New York, N.Y.
8-5-44

Lt. Hugh Warner, one of the heroes of the 99th Pursuit Squadron, was honored with a special service last Sunday morning at the Mt. Cavalry Church, proudly boasts his name on its honor role, at which time the Rev. J. C. Hill, pastor, delivered a prayer for his safe return from overseas.

According to Mrs. Estelle Warner, stepmother of the NY ace, PV's exclusive story last week brought scores of letters and telephone calls from friends of Lt. Warner, a member of the Finance Committee of Cavalry Baptist Church, and now recuperating in Washington from a serious illness, declared that he is "very proud" of his son, Hugh.

Says 99th Will Deliver Anything

Daily World - Atlanta, Ga.
4-15-44

WASHINGTON— (ANP) — The 99th Pursuit squadron will "deliver" anything asked for.

That is the testimony of a white infantryman, Sgt. William H. Snider, 27, of Baldwin, Md. He is a platoon sergeant in the third infantry division, and has seen action in North Africa and Sicily, close to Cassino, and more recently at the Anzio beachhead.

Sgt. Snider is home under the army's rotation plan after 18 months service overseas, and related his story to officials of the war department last week.

Sgt. Snider said that the infantry and air corps were working as a close-kit team in the Italian campaign. "We were helped a lot by the 99th Fighter squadron," he added.

"Those colored fighters were the wildest fellows I've ever seen. It didn't make any difference what you wanted—if you asked them, they'd deliver."

Once, Sgt. Snider reported, his outfit was held up during an advance by three enemy tanks, and called for help from the Negro fliers. 4-15-44

"We were pinned down and couldn't even raise our heels," he said. "Then the planes came along. They swooped down to 300 feet, right through lots of heavy flak, and knocked those three tanks out."

Ground Crew Of 99th Squadron Give Blood

Defender—Chicago, Ill.

15TH AAF IN ITALY.—The men who "keep 'em flying," the hard-working ground crew of the 99th Fighter Group, took time off from their job of aircraft maintenance to donate blood for front-line troops last week.

Two Chicagoans, Sgt. Rodney Jackson, 648 S. Carpenter street, and S-Sgt. Theodore F. Ford, 5336 Michigan avenue, were in this group who went to the mobile units collecting plasma from rear echelon posts. 10-28-44

Great as it is, the supply of blood plasma from the United Nations is not great enough to meet the full requirements of battle conditions. As each engagement produces casualties, ten percent of all wounded require blood transfusions, using from one to nine units of plasma.

99th Flyer Cherishes Parachute After Safe Jump Over Sicily

Afro-American - Baltimore, Md.
1-1-44

Realizes True Value of White Silk; Friendly Italians Take Him Back to Squadron on a Donkey

By FIRST LT. JOHN MORGAN

(Passed by Censor)

I reported to my fighter squadron somewhere in Sicily. After having completed a short period of combat training, under one of the senior pilots, I was assigned to a flight.

After a couple of days of formation flying, plus a few dry runs, I was called upon to fly a regular combat mission, the nature of which was top-cover over allied boats. All went well until the flight leader called in some unidentified aircraft, which are called "bogies" until identified.

We were, immediately, on the look-out, moving out into the direction of the aircraft, trying to determine their identity. I discovered that my plane had run into difficulty.

I wasn't sure whether it had been hit by flak from below, or by a bullet from an enemy plane, but I was sure that the motor was beginning to fail rapidly, and I was also sure that we were over enemy territory.

Headed Back

I called in the difficulty to my flight leader, who gave me instructions to head back to friendly territory, and land if possible. As I pulled into a tight turn, elevating the nose of my ship, could see the flames beginning to come out of the engine. I gave it full throttle, and lowered the nose of the ship so as to get as much speed as possible.

After a very short time the smoke and flame became unbearable. I rolled the ship in a position so that I could see below me, and I saw that I had the earth below me instead of water. Then I felt that it was safe to abandon my ship.

First, I destroyed all secret equipment. I than rolled the canopy back, and turned my ship upside down. After clearing the ship, I pulled my rip-cord. The parachute opened so quickly until I didn't have a chance to get frightened.

The first time a thought occurred to me about my state of safety was just after I recovered from the terrific shock that my parachute gave me upon opening. I looked up and saw that heavenly white silk above me, and for the first time in my career, I realized the true value of the parachute, which I had formerly thought of, mainly, as a cushion.

As my feet embraced the good earth, I felt relieved, but all alone. I sat thinking for a split second; then my flight roared overhead, and dipped their wings to let me know that they had seen me land. Just as I was about to regain my feet, I heard voices from a distance. 1-1-44

They seemed to come closer, and presently people appeared. They lived up in the mountains, and seeing me jump, had followed me to the spot where I landed.

Italians Friendly

Now, they were all Italians, which created in my mind another problem: "How can I make them understand?" They were very friendly, and after I opened my emergency food rations, they were just plain chummy. When we had consumed all the food I had, a rather talkative, fat chap kept saying something and pointing.

Finally, I decided to investigate, so we gathered up my chute, and walked about twenty-five yards. He pointed out a jackass (donkey). I felt a bit weak, so a few of them gave me a hand, and I climbed aboard the tiny animal, and the chap who owned him led him away.

We traveled for about two miles before we met an army truck which carried me to a near-by hospital, where I was examined. The only thing found wrong was just a few scratches on my legs and arms, which were sustained from being dragged a few feet by the parachute.

Club Initiation

But, now, the most surprising angle of the whole experience came at the hospital. When the nurses saw that quarter mile of silk, and realized they did not even have silk stockings, they seriously contemplated writing to the War Department to find out if canvas couldn't be used for parachutes.

I remained at the hospital for a two-day rest, and then returned to my unit. We had a gay old reunion, celebrating my initiation into the "Ghost and Caterpillar Club." 1-1-44

EDITOR'S NOTE — Ollie Stewart, AFRO war correspondent, reported September 4 on the safe return of Lieut. Morgan to the outfit after a week's absence. He stated that the flier, a native of Cartersville, Ga., and Tuskegee, had been seen jumping near Messina on August 17.)

Fatal Crash Of Combat Pilot Recalls Career

Journal & Guide
Norfolk, Va.
1-22-44

By THOMAS W. YOUNG
Journal and Guide War Correspondent
(Passed by Censor)

The death of Lt. John H. Morgan, one of the 99th Fighter Squadron pilots, at an advanced Allied airfield in Italy on January 2, recalled some of the highlights of his career as a combat pilot in the Army Air Forces.

Lt. Morgan's first claim to fame came when he was initiated into the "Caterpillar Club," a mythical organization of pilots who have to parachute from their planes to safety.

That jump was first recorded by this correspondent in a news dispatch from Sicily where the Squadron was then based and engaged in operations supporting the American Seventh Army in its drive to crush Axis resistance in the northern part of that island.

SKULL FRACTURE

He was the son of Mr. and Mrs. J. S. Morgan, 407 Jones street, Catersville, Ga., who have been notified by the War Department of his death. Mr. Morgan is principal of the local high school.

Young Morgan, who was 23 years old, died as the result of a skull fracture sustained when his P-40 Warhawk fighter plane overshot the landing strip on his return from a routine flight.

The plane ploughed into the field and was almost demolished. Morgan was unconscious when removed from the wreckage and died six hours later. Burial was in an American cemetery in Italy. He had 26 sorties to his credit.

On one of his first combat missions, Morgan made his bid for a place in the Hall of Fame. The incident is more fully described in the following paragraphs taken from the article on the "Caterpillar Club" which appeared in the Journal and Guide on October 2, 1943: 1-22-44

HUMOROUS, NOISY

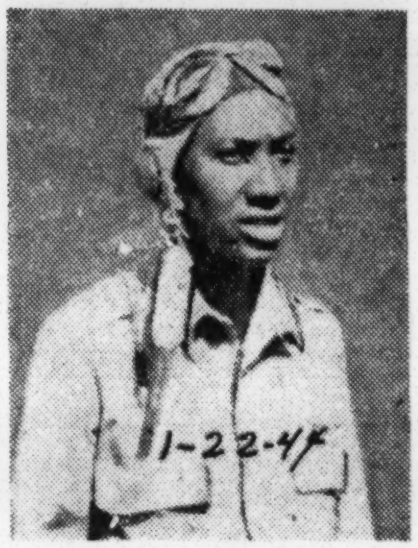
The "Caterpillar Club," gained its third member from the ranks of the second quartet of replacement pilots who had come overseas to the squadron just over a fortnight before.

Tall, slightly built, humorous, and noisy Lt. Morgan was off with a flight of P-40 Warhawks to provide protective cover for shipping along the northern coast of Sicily. During the patrol the engine of his plane went rough. Soon it seemed to be throwing parts through its sides.

HAS DIFFICULTIES

Enemy armies were still holding out in the northeast corner of the island, but fortunately Morgan was on the fair weather side of the line, so his hasty decision to abandon the aircraft did not involve his possible capture and imprisonment.

Pilot Killed



Lieut. John H. Morgan, 23, of Cartersville, Ga., whose death in a plane crash in Italy has been announced by the War Department. During August he had the thrilling experience of parachuting from his P-40 Warhawk over Sicily. (Exclusive photo by Journal and Guide War Correspondent).

30Hrs. to Prepare Cooks Work Baltimore, Md. Afro-American, — Baltimore, Md. First Christmas Dinner for 99th

Meal Included GI Eggnog, 400 Pounds Turkey, Fresh Vegetables, Hot Biscuits; Rain Didn't Dampen Spirits

1-15-44

By ART CARTER
AFRO War Correspondent with U.S. Troops in Italy

ADVANCED AIR BASE (Via Air Mail) — The heavy haze from the nearby mountains still

[Copyright. Reproduction in whole or in part expressly forbidden.]

of rain fell lightly on the double hovered overhead and the pit-pat pyramidal tent as Sgt. Robert Crumbley, of Atlanta, Ga., pricked a fork in the 16-pound turkey and enthusiastically exclaimed, "Oh, boy, it's tender — just like the ones I used to cook at home."

It was 7:30 Christmas morning and most of the 99th Fighter Squadron's men were still asleep in their tents, but Sergeant Crumbley and the other cooks had been at work over the hot stoves since 8 p.m., the night before.

Sergeant Crumbley was one of the staff of eight who cooked in two shifts to prepare the traditional Christmas dinner for the squadron.

400 Pounds of Turkey

Under direction of S/Sgt. Matthew Roberts, formerly of Baltimore and more recently of New York, mess sergeant, the cooks had roasted some 400 pounds of turkey, prepared 10 gallons of peas, 10 gallons of potatoes, 10 gallons of cranberries, 10 gallons of stringbeans, hot biscuits and 30 gallons of coffee for the aviation unit's first Christmas overseas. 1-15-44

The vegetables were all fresh—a rarity in the combat zone, but a Yuletide blessing that all enjoyed. The men worked a day shift, a night shift, and six hours the next day, beginning right after breakfast Christmas Eve.

They took time out only for a bite to eat and a snatch of rest, as each wanted to make other members of the squadron happy with some semblance of Christmas as they formerly knew it.

Celebrate Despite Rain

How well they succeeded in bringing a measure of happiness to the outfit was clearly indicated as the enlisted men lined up for mess and cheerfully consumed the turkey and other delicacies in a manner that bespoke their gratitude.

Of course they all wished they were at home with their feet under their mother's or wife's table, but as a war-time substitute they contented themselves with the hope that next year will see them in the old domestic setting.

Not even the rain which fell most of the day and dampened the camp, which the boys jocularly call "Mudville," deterred them in their celebration of Christmas.

Prior to the enlisted men's dinner, Capt. George S. Roberts, commanding officer, brought greetings, and there were brief talks by First Lieuts. Henry M. Letcher, Bernard S. Proctor and Cornelius Vincent, Jr.

Tables Laden with Gifts

Tables were laden with cigarettes, books, magazines, candy, nuts and an array of useful articles — all gifts from friends in the States, USO clubs and army special service units.

To top off the day's celebration, the men had a few gallons of liquid stimulation, namely, eggnog. It was GI eggnog, made with canned milk, but served the purpose wonderfully.

M/Sgt. Ellsworth H. Dansby, of Decatur, Ill., who has been away from home for three Christmases, said he had not seen the men enjoy themselves better at any other time. "It was one of the best dinners we've ever had," Dansby insisted. 1-15-44

Varied Drinks for Officers

At the Officers' Club, the commissioned personnel had an even more jovial time as there were fewer of them and a greater variety of drinks.

They read greetings from President Franklin D. Roosevelt and heard greetings from Col. Earl R. Bates, Jr., CO of the 79th Group, of which they are a part, and from their own CO, Captain Roberts.

Their menu was the same as the enlisted men's, and the club was properly decorated for the occasion with a nifty little metal-trimmed bar in the corner, built by First Lieut. Benote H. Wimp, of Chicago, and Howard L. Baugh, Petersburg, Va., and artistically painted with the squadron's insignia by Pvt. Herman B. Bowden of Roselle, N.J. 1-15-44

Among the enlisted men, Sgt. Will Etheridge, operations clerk, of Grove Hill, Ala., won a special present as winner of the "sortie guessing contest," conducted by Captain Roberts. Sergeant Etheridge guessed 275 as the number of sorties the squadron would make during December and was 2 off the correct mark — 273.

N.Y. Private Tops as Cook

Besides Sergeants Roberts and Crumbley, those who handled the holiday mess were: S/Sgt. Herman Fraley, NYC; Sgt. Herbert Nelson, Spartanburg, S.C.; Cpl. Cecil Carruth, Lula, Ga.; Sgt. Charles P. Ingram, Sgt. Robert McFan, Doyline, La.; and Pvt. Cooley Tolliver, New York City, who is rated by S/Sgt. Roberts as "the best cook" in the army.

S/Sgt. Roberts, 30, was formerly a dining car waiter and expert baker. He personally baked the biscuits. He joined the squadron at Tuskege in February, 1942, and has been with it ever since.

Pfc. James Atkinson, Savannah, Ga., and Pvt. Warren Theriot, Houma, La., waiters in the officers' mess, also worked overtime during the day.

Each tent had its own Christmas effect with fruit cake, candy, nuts and many gifts from home scattered on tables, boxes and bags. The Christmas spirit really enlivened the camp.

At the same time, Major Roberts announced the elevation of 1st Lt. Clarence C. Jamison to captain. 1-15-44

Major Roberts, 25, Fairmont, W.Va., has been in command of the dive bombing squadron since the departure of Lt. Col. Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., for the States last September. He previously commanded the outfit at Tuskegee, having held top position during the three-month period from June to August, 1942, before Davis's assignment.

Began Flying Early

Major Roberts is a West Virginia State College graduate and former instructor. Figuratively, he has been flying since he was in knee pants, although actually he flew his first plane at 21.

He began his flying career at West Virginia State, under the CAA program, where he earned a private pilot's license; then went to Tuskegee, where he was graduated in the first class and later taught advanced training.

He has been steadily moving upward in aviation. He served as operations officer of his squadron when it first came overseas, holding that post until his promotion to commanding officer.

Takes Share of Missions

Major Roberts is an inspirational leader, taking regular missions whenever administrative duties permit, and frequently leading flights. He has 47 missions with 42 sorties to his credit, and 71 hours, 20 minutes of operational time in combat to date.

Captain Jamison, 25, Cleveland, is the oldest flight leader, having held that coveted position 17 months. He sparks flight and was one of the squadron's original pilots.

Jamison earned pilot's license at the Ford Landing Airport while a student at the University of Chicago; then trained at Tuskegee, graduating in the second cadet class. He was assigned to the Fighter Squadron in April, 1942, as one of the unit's first officers.

Captain Jamison is one of four pilots who hit the fifty-sortie mark by the end of 1943. He flew his fiftieth on Friday, joining First Lt. James T. Wiley, with 53; First Lt. Leon C. Roberts, Captain Charles B. Hall, 52 each. Jamison has 66 missions and 102 hours, 15 minutes of operational time.

Both New Fathers

Both Major Roberts and Captain Jamison are married. Each has a baby child which he has never seen.

Under Colonel Bates of Williamette, Ill., democracy reigns supreme in this group. Whether the rest of the Army Air Forces knows it or not, here colored and white pilots are flying and fighting together, and doing a good job of it.

Frequently P-40 Warhawk pilots fly mingled flights, with members of the all-colored squadron as flying wings for other squadrons, and vice versa, in perfect harmony.

Successes Continual

Weather interferred with missions this week, but several were run against enemy gun positions and troops near Chieti in Central Italy, with the squadron continuing close support work with the British Eighth Army.

Frequently fliers had to clear snow-capped Apennine mountains to reach their objective, but the targets were reached with success and no planes were lost, though intense anti-aircraft fire was reported. 1-15-44

The squadron ran its mission total to 248, its sorties to 1285, closing out its seven-month 1943 combat record, which has been sprinkled with daring deeds, death and destruction.

The squadron's air support was partially instrumental in the fall of Ortona, which was captured by Canadian troops, as many of the unit's recent missions were directed in that vicinity. Ortona, once a peace-time summer resort, is now reported to be a scene of utter devastation.

Incidentally, Captain Jamison is the second 99th Squadron pilot to win promotion to a captaincy since the outfit entered combat. 2-5-44

Bare Inside Story Of How Officers Tried To Slander 99th

DEFENDER, Chicago, Ill

(Defender Washington Bureau)

WASHINGTON. — Now it can be told—the inside story of how top-ranking Army officials tried to smear the 99th Pursuit Squadron as "cowards" and wreck the entire Air Corps training program for Negroes!

The crack all-Negro squadron finally given its first chance to go into combat action against the Nazis supplied a smashing answer to these backdoor slanders this week by its slam-bang victory in downing 12 enemy craft in two days.

This powerful rebuttal made air history and ended once and for all the legend that Negroes are "yellow" and cannot master speedy, modern warplanes. Now it can be revealed that General H. H. Arnold, head of the Army Air Corps, a little more than six months ago requested that Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson junk the air training program for Negroes because they had "failed."

True Story

Basis of Arnold's sweeping request was a report from overseas which recited the alleged failures and mistakes of Negro pilots and declared that they "turned tail and ran" when they faced the enemy.

The report was whispered about by anti-Negro army officials and was handed to Time Magazine. An article followed which virtually called the so-called "experiment" with Negro fliers a failure and indicated that colored pilots could not handle warplanes. 2-5-44

So fine a job of slander was done by these Army officials that even a Negro newspaper war correspondent with the 99th spread the tale of the squadron's failures on his return to this country.

Secretary Stimson, who knew the White House would not stand for the wrecking of the Negro air program, rejected Arnold's request from purely political motives. He is supposed to have pointed out that such a step would alienate the entire Negro population and be a further blow to low Negro morale.

Kept 'Under Wraps'

Instead the 99th went into Italy with other Air Corps units and was kept "under wraps." They were limited to strafing and bombing missions and never got a chance to meet the enemy in combat.

With only one downed plane to their credit in nine months overseas, because they were not engaged in dog-fighting, the 99th was still the subject of constant derision by Army officials determined to put thumbs down on Negroes in war aviation.

One false report of 59 planes downed by the 99th got out but was proved to be a fake.

Then came the Allied landing below Rome. 2-5-44

With every single combat plane needed to cover up the Nettuno beachhead, the 99th finally got its big break. Although the P-40's are slower than either the Focke-Wulfe's or Messerschmidts, they were assigned to combat missions to protect the Allied operations below the Italian capital.

Finally Get Chance

But for five days fate seemed to be against them. Despite daily sorties over the beachhead area, not a single German showed up. But Thursday of last week, the ace pilots got their chance to make certain Army brasshats eat their words.

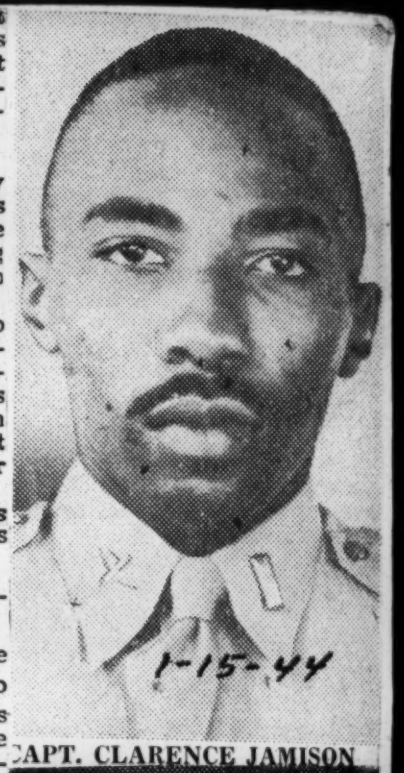
They banged into the Nazis with a vengeance and tallied eight victories. Friday they felled four more.

Their twelve Jerries were part of 87 Nazis downed in the two days.

Thus came the most effective answer yet to the claim that Negroes can't fly modern combat warplanes, that they're "yellow," that they wont fight to protect "white soldiers."

Today in Washington a lot of Air Corps faces are crimson with shame and embarrassment. The 99th has proved their mettle and to the satisfaction not only of Secretary Stimson but of General Arnold himself. 2-5-44

Negroes can fly with the best and the dozen wrecked Luftwaffe craft burning on Italian soil are the best testimonial to their prowess in the air.



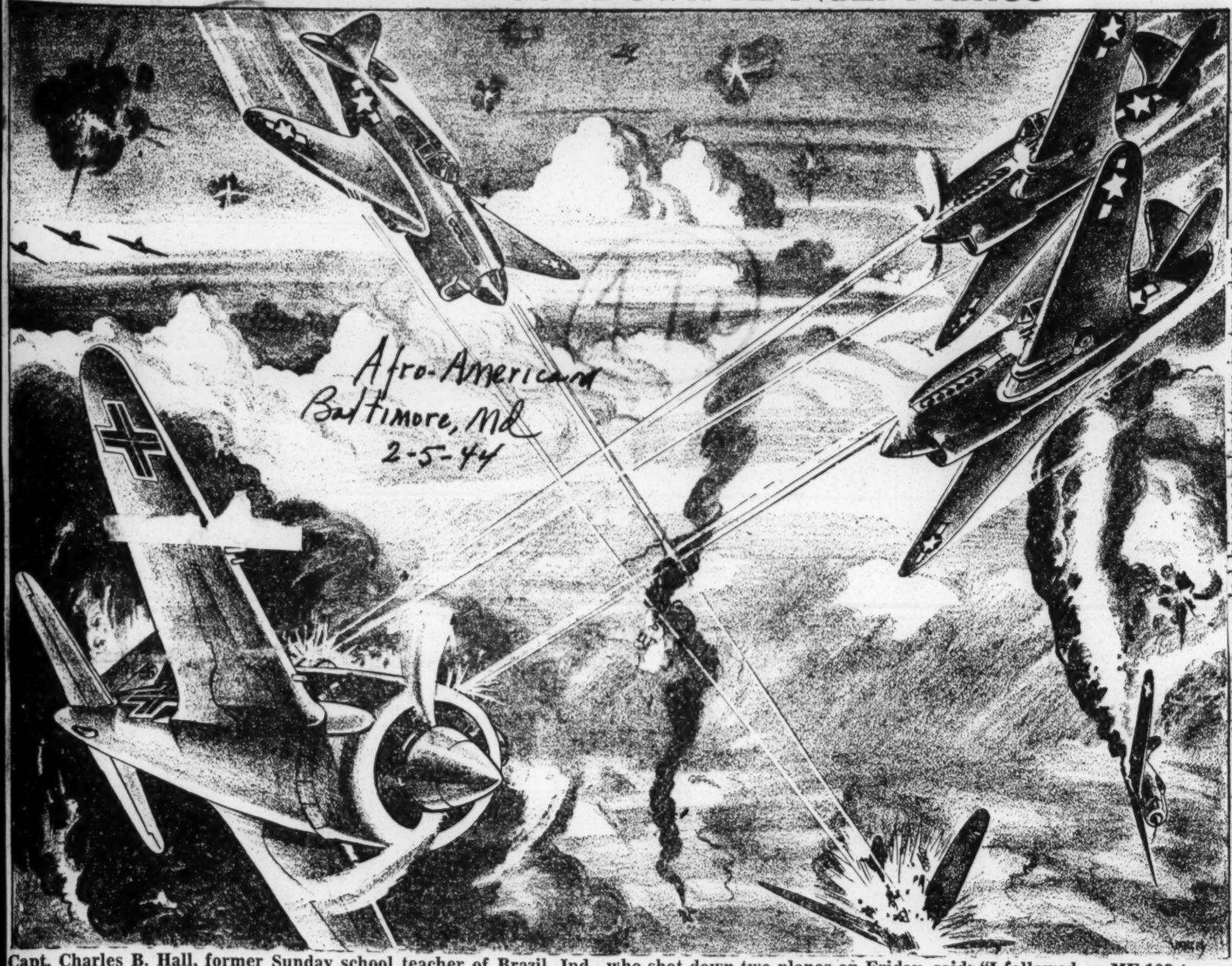
1-15-44

CAPT. CLARENCE JAMISON

CAPT. GEORGE S. ROBERTS

99th Pursuit Squadron

99th Pilots Shoot Down 12 Nazi Planes



Capt. Charles B. Hall, former Sunday school teacher of Brazil, Ind., who shot down two planes on Friday, said: "I followed an ME-109 toward the sea and gave it two bursts of fire. It flamed and crashed into the ground. I then turned and chased a FW-190 toward Rome, giving it short bursts until it tumbled to the ground."

Flyers Catch Nazis Bombing at Nettuno

Afro-American-Baltimore, Md.

2-5-44

"We Have Been Waiting for This for Five Months," Flyers Cry

By ART CARTER

AFRO War Correspondent with U.S. Troops in Italy

[Copyright. Republication in whole or in part expressly forbidden.]

ADVANCED AIR BASE IN ITALY — (By Cable, Censored)—Pandemonium reigned supreme at the 99th Fighter Squadron's operations tent, last week, as crack pilots returned from their history-making air attacks against the Germans, running their scoreboard to twelve Nazi planes destroyed, two probably destroyed, and four damaged during two days of fighting—a record for the current invasion of the Anzio and Nettuno Beaches, south of Rome.

Like football players bursting into a dining room after a triumph in the season's classic, war-weary pilots were jubilant in their description of victories over the Luftwaffe, giving vivid recollections of how they poured hot lead into enemy aircraft.

Waiting 5 Months for Chance

Capt. Rodney Custis, operations chief, declared, after the initial encounter on Thursday: "It was the roughest day of the campaign, but good hunting all the way." Major George S. Roberts, commanding officer, said:

"We've been looking forward to such happening, but this is the first time in five months that we have encountered enemy opposition. The whole show lasted little more than five minutes. It was a chasing battle, rather than a running battle, as the Germans were always on the move. We poured hell into them."

Captain Custis, a Howard University graduate, was one of ten pilots to gain victories, while Major Roberts scored a star, who on Friday recorded his second victory in two days, damage. He also wiped out a machine gun nest after being said of his initial triumph:

forced home when flak knocked out his ship's electrical sys- "An FW-190 was s
tem, disabling its guns. 2-5-44 yards, firing continuous
flew off and it went into a
I saw a big sheet of flam

Chased Nazi 7 Miles

Custis emphasized: "I let loose a burst of fire, chased an FW-190 seven miles toward Rome and saw tracers hit his fuselage and the plane crash."

Lieutenants Erwin B. Lawrence of Cleveland and Al
wayne Dunlap of Washington saw the plane hit by Custi
crash. Lawrence gained a probable damage on another en
emy plane which was observed diving for the ground, smok
ing excessively.

Lieut. Eagleson, flying his fifth sortie, destroyed another
He said: "I was on tail of FW-190 that was firing at Lawrence
when I lined him up, gave him a burst and continued to fol
low him. I saw him smoking 100 feet from the ground, while Lieut.
poured fire into it at 500 feet and saw it crash."
Edward L. Toppins declared: "Saw my tracers going into an
FW-190 which finally disappeared behind some trees in a
gully." 2-5-44

Buddy Saw It Crash

Lieut. John L. Hamilton saw the plane hit by Toppins
burst into grayish white smoke, confirming the former's de
struction of the aircraft.

Lieut. Robert W. Deiz, former Oregon University sprint

Capt. Rodney Custis, operations chief, declared, after the initial encounter on Thursday: "It was the roughest day of the campaign, but good hunting all the way." Major George S. Roberts, commanding officer, said:

"We've been looking forward to such happening, but this is the first time in five months that we have encountered enemy opposition. The whole show lasted little more than five minutes. It was a chasing battle, rather than a running battle, as the Germans were always on the move. We poured hell into them."

Captain Custis, a Howard University graduate, was one

Capt. Charles B. Hall, 23, of Brazil, Ind., scored a twin
shooting down an ME-109 and a FW-190
een a formation of German fighter planes
welve aircraft over Anzio Beach.

Capt. Hall Scores Double

ory on the second big day went to Second
h of Los Angeles, who downed a FW-190.
urn from the second day's mission, the
ed with a visit by Major Gen. John K.
g general of the 12th Air Force, who per-
ed them and their commanding officer.
h with the magnificent job you are doing.
. Just don't overwork yourselves."

Total Score Now 13

ought the squadron's nine months' over-
een destroyed, four probably destroyed

rsday, the lone member of the pioneer
have a Nazi victory—having shot down a
ly 2 over Sicily—now has three German

The big bag brought
seas record to thirteen
and six damaged.

Hall, until Thursda
colored squadron to have
Focke Wulfe last July 2
planes to his credit.

Hall, a former Sunday school teacher, asserted: "Six enemy planes came down in a string. We intercepted them at 3,000 feet and followed them on deck. I followed an ME-109 toward the sea and gave it two bursts of fire. It flamed and crashed to the ground. I then turned and chased an FW-190 toward Rome, giving it short bursts until it tumbled to the ground." 2-5-44

Hall said that they first saw the German planes trying to dive bomb Allied ships in the harbor.

Smith, who is 22, saw the Germans for the first time Friday. He asserted: "The sky was full of planes, but I picked out one FW-190 and chased him to the outskirts of Rome, firing all the way. The plane burned and smoked profusely and I knew I had got him. It's a good feeling."

All of the victorious pilots returned safely.

Lieut. William Griffin of 99th Reported Missing

Afro-American - Baltimore, Md.
2-5-44

Plane of 23-Year-Old Ala. Pilot on 23rd Sortie Last Seen in Flames Near Target Area

By ART CARTER

AFRO War Correspondent with U.S. Troops in Italy

[Copyright. Reproduction in whole or in part expressly forbidden.]

AN ADVANCED AIR BASE IN ITALY — (By Cable) — Twenty-three proved an unlucky number for Second Lieut. William Griffin, 99th Fighter Squadron pilot, who was reported missing in action over enemy lines, January 15.

The 23-year-old pilot of Birmingham, Ala., failed to return from a bombing mission against Nazi-controlled railroad yards in Italy while on his twenty-third sortie.

Plane Seen Aflame

Griffin's plane was last seen smoking at 2,000 feet in the vicinity of the target area.

Griffin was flying "Tail-end Charlie" on the ill-fated day and other pilots in the six-man flight were unable to observe what happened after making the bomb run as he was trailing the rest.

Detection that one was missing was made after the pilots left the target area and headed for home. The pilots of another squadron reported seeing Griffin's plane aflame at 10,000 feet and later at 2,000, which was the final report on the lanky fighter squadron pilot who had been in the thick of the air action since joining the unit in October.

Pilots on the flight reported that they flew through "a solid wall of flak," some of the heaviest enemy fire encountered in recent operations. 2-5-44

Former School Teacher

Griffin was Tuskegee-trained and was one of the squadron's recent replacements. He was a graduate of Miles Memorial College and a former school teacher.

On this mission the squadron scored one direct hit, two hits within close vicinity of the target, demolishing a building shed besides railroad tracks.

Griffin made the bomb run and apparently was the victim of enemy flak on leaving the target.

99th Squadron Moves to New 5th Army Front

Afro-American
Baltimore, Md.
2-5-44

By ART CARTER

AFRO War Correspondent with U.S. Troops in Italy

[Copyright. Reproduction in whole or in part expressly forbidden.]

ADVANCED AIR BASE IN ITALY.—(By Cable, Censored)—Altering its base of operations to Fifth Army side of the Italian peninsular, the 99th Fighter Squadron this week participated in the drive up the road to Rome, giving brilliant air support to Allied convoys and beach invasion parties behind the German lines in a gigantic campaign to capture the Italian capital.

The switch was made several days ago and now the Tuskegee-trained squadron, commanded by Maj. George S. Roberts, is working shoulder to shoulder with other air squadrons in the big push on Rome.

New Slogan Adopted

The unit has adopted the slogan: "Rome, Berlin, Home." Every man, from the flying commanding officers to unsung heroes of the ground crew who keep the ships in shape, is determined to make that slogan one of reality.

For the first two days at its new field—an old German-controlled base where the wreckage of Nazi planes is still visible—the squadron did patrol duty and fighter sweeps, flying protective cover for Allied battleships shelling land gun installations from the sea.

Operations moved into an accelerated tempo during the fourth day, however, as the invasion missions began. On convoy and patrol missions, the squadron was busy from dawn to dusk, forming an air unbrella for Allied ships moving men, ammunition and supplies.

Sixteen ships were employed on virtually every mission, enabling the squadron to run its sortie total to 1,505, and its mission total to 268. Every available pilot saw action in the big campaign, with new pilots, Lieut. Alberth Manning of Spartanburg, S.C.; Pearlee E. Saunders, Bessemer, Ala.; John L. Hamilton, Los Angeles, and Wilson V. Eagleson, Bloomington, Ind., flying their initial missions.

Work Begins Early

Daylight was barely breaking through a misty sly when the squadron's pilots took off each day carrying belly tanks insteads of bombs, as formerly used in the low-level bombing which had been their job for the past two months.

With their activity stepped up pilots envisioned opportunities of downing Nazi planes, but in two days of intense aerial support only one FW-190 was observed and the enemy planes stayed upstairs at 15,000 feet, never threatening the convoy. 2-5-44

Ack-Ack Fire Heavy

Flight leaders reported heavy and intense ack ack on the second day, but all planes returned safely and unmarked. Typical of the new pilots' observation was that of Lieutenant Hamilton, who said:

"I know what flak valley is like now. I saw plenty of it and one shell burst right by my wing."

He was flying his first mission.

Veteran pilots who have been through three previous campaigns in the squadron's nine-month overseas record at Pantelleria, Sicily, and Salerno, took it in stride, decrying their luck in not encountering enemy opposition.

Did Double Duty

The change of fields necessitated a division of the squadron for several days and actually the squadron did double duty for a short period with a skeleton party of pilots remaining at the old base on the Eighth Army side.

The advance echelon, headed by Lieuts. Henry M. Letcher, George R. Currie, Rober Deiz, Howard L. Baugh, James L. Johnson, Walter L. Lawson, Dudley W. Stevenson, and S/Sgt. Cyril Byron, former Morgan athlete, acting first sergeant, reached the new base four days before the second group.

Major Roberts and his pilots ferried their planes to the new spot. Other pilots, ground officers, and enlisted men have been reuniting daily.

Have Better Quarters

The move enabled the squadron's personnel to get relief from the mud and rugged life at their old tented camp, as they are now billeted in abandoned buildings. Officers reside in an old Italian doctor's villa, while enlisted men are housed in an abandoned native school house.

Both buildings are damp and dimly lit, but strike the fancy of the men as they now have a roof over their heads and to some extent, are able to live in a partially home-like manner.

In the old camp, rain and wind frequently played havoc with their usual routine. A few days before their departure, a wind storm uprooted five tents, driving the occupants to new quarters and pricking morale.

Squadron Sets Record for Invasion of Rome Area

Afro-American - Baltimore, Md.
2-5-44

ADVANCED AIR BASE IN ITALY—(By Cable, Censored)—In a day of death dealing aerial warfare that highlighted five days of protective patrol duty for the Allied invasion of the Anzio and Nettuno Beaches South of Rome, the 99th Fighter Squadron on Thursday blasted eight German planes out of the sky, scored damages against four others, and gained credit for two others probably damaged.

Eager, determined P-40 War-hawk pilots, long anxious for personal battle with the Luftwaffe, encountered a nest of Focke-Wolfe 190's attempting to dive bomb Allied shipping and chased the Nazis in spectacular battles on both morning and afternoon missions.

History Making Day

It was the most history-making day of the squadron's record, and the unit came through with triumphant colors, leaving a trail of destruction in its wake.

The peak performance was a record for the current invasion as the all-colored squadron intercepted Jerry fighter-bomber planes over the assault beaches and fired away with all guns, virtually clearing the skyways of enemy aircraft in its bid to strafe Allied ships and troops.

The 99th was on the aggressive in every dog fight, with the Germans on the run. The only enemy firing came from ground attacks as the squadron's pilots chased Jerries up to Rome.

Victories went to Capt. L. Rodney Custis, Hartford, Conn.; 1st Lieuts. Willie Ashley, Sumter, S.C.; Leon C. Roberts, Pritchard, Ala.; Howard L. Baugh, Petersburg, Va.; Edward L. Toppings, San Francisco; Robert W. Deiz, Portland, Ore.; 2nd Lieuts. Clarence W. Allen, Mobile, Ala.; Charles P. Bailey, Punta Gorda, Fla.; and Wilson Eagleson, Bloomington, Ind.

2 Share Victory

Lieutenants Baugh and Allen shared one victory, each receiving credit for the fifth Nazi plane destroyed in the massive air assault.

1st Lieut. Erwin B. Lawrence of Cleveland claimed credit for a plane probably destroyed, while Lieuts. Elwood T. River, Trenton, and Jack Rogers, Chicago, jointly claimed credit for another probable. 2-5-44

Major George S. Roberts of Fairmont, W.Va., commanding officer; 1st Lieuts. Henry B. Perry, Thomasville, Ga.; George T. McCrumby, Fort Worth; and Baugh registered damaged planes.

In addition to this wholesale destruction of enemy planes, the squadron wiped out an enemy machine gun nest.

Major Roberts and Lieutenant Allen sighted the gun position en route home and straffed the spot, leaving it aflame and smoking.

Over a dozen planes participated in the morning mission and all returned safely, with two partially damaged by enemy flak. Major Roberts's plane returned with its left wing bearing a huge hole under its guns and Lieuten- and Perry's ship had its ammunition box demolished, both pilots being able to continue gunfire after receiving plane damages.

On this mission, Capt. Clarence C. Jamison of Cleveland was flight leader and Major Roberts headed the second element. Other pilots who engaged in the battle were Lieutenants Herman Lawson, Marysville, Calif.; John L. Hamilton, Los Angeles; and Albert H. Manning, Spartanburg, S.C.

Lieut. Pearlee Saunders of Bessemer, Ala., failed to make the trip when his engine went bad after the takeoff and he was forced to return.

Wiley Leads P.M. Mission

The afternoon mission was headed by Lieut. James T. Wiley of Pittsburgh, continuing the earlier assault as it registered three destroyed planes against five for the morning group.

Lieutenants Bailey and Eagleson and Captain Custis scored victories in the late assault.

Two other unusual events marked the busy day of destruction as 1st Lieut. Allen G. Lane of Demopolis, Ala., was forced to bail out over one of the assault beaches after his plane caught fire after the attack, and 2nd Lieut. John A. Gibson of Chicago crashed in landing after his plane's hydraulic system failed, having been hit by enemy flak. Neither pilot was harmed.

One Pilot Missing

The only regrettable incident was the failure of one pilot to return. 2-5-44

Gibson belly landed on the field while Lane returned to the base two hours after the mission in a cub plane piloted by S-Sgt. William R. Lynn, white, of Millbury, Mass. Lane parachuted out at 5,000 feet when his plane began smoking, and landed safely amid an Allied trucking outfit.

Called Great Show

Commendation for the 99th came from all circles, Colonel Erwin Bates, 79th group commander, describing the big bag as a great show and personally extending congratulations to Major Roberts.

The marvelous achievement indelibly stamped the squadron as one of the hottest fighter-bomber units in this theatre, and erased all doubts as to its ability. This marked the initial time in five months that enemy aircraft has been encountered, and the squadron's pilots were ready for the tremendous task, crowning their record with mounting success.

Pilots Praise Leaders

Pilots who obtained victories were unanimous in praise of their flight leaders, who first observed the enemy aircraft and guided their men right into the thick of the battle, with every pilot following in close formation.

The battle took place near Rome, with pilots reporting the Italian capital clearly visible as they chased Nazi planes to cover.

Ashley, 22, a Hampton graduate, declared, "I saw an FW-190 and jumped directly on its tail, heading toward Rome. I started firing at close range—so close that I could see the pilot. After blasting away with all my ammunition, I saw the enemy plane smoking and fire flaming from its left side."

Lieutenant Roberts, 22, youngest of the squadron's original pilots, exclaimed: "I started firing on the turn. The Nazi ship was weaving, but I picked up speed, going down, got in at close range and one burst of fire caught the plane in its wing. It flipped over on its back and went down to the ground."

Baugh, 24, exploded: "I first saw twelve plus FW-190's cut away from our ships and hit the deck. I was flying at 5,000 feet and went down and started firing. I gave three or four bursts of fire, then saw one plane skid along the tree tops, running clouds of dust as it hit the ground."

47a-1944

99th Pursuit Squadron

Final Instructions Before Encounter with Nazis

First Lt. Herbert E. Carter of Emory, Miss. (foreground) gives details of the day's mission to members of the 99th Fighter Squadron at an air field in Italy. Others in the group, left to right, are Lts. Hammond A. Lawson, Maryville, Cal.; William H. Walker, Carbondale, Ill.; Elwood T. Driver, Trenton, N.J., and George T. McCrumby, Fort Worth, Texas.

99th Fliers Shake Jinx, Make Big Kill

Courier-Pittsburgh Pa.
2-5-44

By EDGAR T. ROUZEAU, Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The 99th Pursuit Squadron has thrown off its jinx! Our fighting airmen, after nine months filled with suspense and hard luck, finally found the big opportunity for which they waited so patiently and long. It came, according to the War Department, in savage air action last week over the Anzio-Nettuno beachhead below Rome. Our boys bagged eight enemy planes last Thursday and four on Friday for a total of 12, thus proving their fighting ability to the doubting Thomases of the world.

The record is one of the best ever turned in by a fighter squadron. The air battles over the beachheads are intense, with the Nazis attempting to wipe out landing installations. Allied airmen destroyed 87 enemy fighters and bombers during the dogfights on Thursday and Friday as compared to the loss of 12 of our planes.

NO 99th PILOTS REPORTED MISSING

The War Department communique did not state whether the 99th lost any of its airmen.

The big victory broke a jinx which had the squadron in a vice-like grip since last July 2. On that date, in a big air battle over Castelvestrano airdrome in Northwest Sicily, Capt. Charles (Buster) Hall shot down a Foche-Wulf and the squadron was credited with its first "kill." Until Thursday, that Foche-Wulf had been a nightmare to the pilots. It represented not only their first kill, but also their last. It mocked them everywhere they went. 2-5-44

CAPTAIN HALL BAGS TWO

Captain Hall went scoreless on the first day of the more recent drama, but on Friday, he settled the argument by bagging two Germans to score the only double of the day by any Allied airman on this front.

As fate would have it, three rookies who recently joined the squadron, were credited with individual "kills" while many of the senior pilots who have served with the 99th since its origin had to stand by with scoreless slates. The rookies involved were Lts. Clarence W. Allen of Chicago, Charles P. Bailey, Punta Gorda, Fla., and Wilson Eagleston, Bloomington, Ind. They were in a group of eight replacements to join the squadron in Sicily in late October.

Then there is 1st Lt. Robert W. Deizz of Portland, Ore. He got himself a "Jerry," too. He is the young man whose handsome countenance beams down on you from the War Bond poster, "Keep Us Flying." Over 200,000 of those posters are on display throughout the country.

REMEMBERS FIRST SORTIE

Deiz, graduate of the University of Oregon and a former cello player with the Portland Symphony, is practically a squadron rookie himself. He arrived in Sicily to join the squadron only a month or so before Bailey, Eagleston and Allen. I remember his big boyish grin when I shook his hand in congratulation after his return from his first sortie.

Besides these 99th fliers, credit for individual victories went to Capt. J. Rodney Custis, Hartford, Conn., and to 1st Lts. Willie Ashley, Sumter, S.C.; Leon Roberts, Pritchard, Ala. and Edward Toppins, San Francisco, Calif. One enemy plane was shot down jointly by 1st Lt. Howard Lee Baugh, Petersburg, Va., and 2nd Lt. Clarence Allen, Mobile, Ala.

ROOKIE RIVALS CAPTAIN

It is almost ironic that Captain Custis should bag his first plane on the same day that Eagleston downed his. From the moment Eagleston joined the squadron, he usurped the seat used by Captain Hall at the mess table usually reserved for senior pilots. Captain Hall said nothing the first day, but on the second day, he took him to task.

"This seat," he told Eagleston sternly, "belongs to the squadron operations officer." (That happens to be Custis' job and title). "Get up this minute," he told Eagleston. "Go to another table and find yourself a seat with the rookies."

After the meal was over, Eagleston buttonholed me. "How many planes has that big shot got to his credit?" he asked. When he learned that he and the captain were on even terms in that respect, he said "Huh," but in a tone that spoke volumes. I knew then that Captain Hall would have to look to his laurels if he did not want to be shown up by this rookie.

MEMBER OF FIRST CLASS

Captain Custis, incidentally, is one of a group of five Negro fighter-pilots in the first class graduated from the Army training field at Tuskegee, Ala. Lt. Col. B. O. Davis, Jr., who took the squadron overseas in April, 1943, and commanded it until early September, was one of his classmates. Another is Major George Spencer Roberts, present commander of the squadron.

The feat of the Negro squadron is very much like that of a great baseball team coming out of a batting slump. Although the boys have turned in brilliant records as dive bombers and as bomber escorts, they never reecived the credit they deserved. They simply could not coax the rapidly shrinking German air force to operate in the areas in which they worked, and for months on end they went without a fight. The world, expecting more from them than from any other outfit, ignored all of this.

THRILLING TO ALL 2-5-44

Those dogfights last Thursday and Friday must have been thrilling to all men in the outfit. I know they must have talked about it far into the night, calling out to each other in the pitch dark of a lightless camp a few miles behind the front lines. That's what they used to do when I was around them, and they never had anything like this to talk about.

Well, our boys had to wait a long time to cash in. Nine long months, in fact. They had the training. They had the teamwork. They had the intestinal stamina. They had the ambition. All they needed was opportunity with a proper setting.

Give them more settings such as they enjoyed last Thursday and Friday and this won't be the last mass bag they will report. I'll hang on that.

Captain Charles Hall Gets Two Nazi Planes; Ten Other Fliers Share Honors

Courier Pittsburgh Pa.
2-5-44

BY STAFF CORRESPONDENT

ALLIED HEADQUARTERS, ALGIERS—(By Cable)—The famous 99th . . . affectionately nicknamed the "Red Squadron," became of age over the week end . . . WITH A VENGEANCE! The daring All-Negro Pursuit Squadron,

99th Exploits Headlined In London Dailies!

LONDON—(Cable by Randy Dixon, War Correspondent)—Heroic exploits of fighter fliers of the famous 99th Pursuit Squadron, were headlined in London newspapers over the weekend. Several of the dispatches told how the Negro airmen had chased enemy planes to Rome, crashing them in flames on the city's outskirts.

grim of features and gimlet-eyed, amassed a total score of 12 confirmed German planes (Focke-Wulf 190's and Messerschmitt 109's) during two days of desperate fighting over the important Italian Beachhead at Nettuno. In addition, two more enemy planes are probably destroyed and four damaged. Sharing honors with him was an-squadron operations officer; Leading the second day's action Lt.Lts. Robert W. Deiz, Portland, Ore.; with a "double" was Capt. Charles Hall, of Bloomington, Ind. Also credited with bringing down newcomer, was 24 years old Mon-Toppin, San Francisco, Calif.; The first German plane credited today. Others who participated in ard Baugh, Petersburg, Va.; Sec-themselves in action. The 99th is the squadron in an air battle over the three engagements were Capt. Charles Bailey, Punta under command of Major George

Spencer Roberts, Fairmont, W. Ca.

MOST VIOLENT IN CAMPAIGN 2-5-44

The two-day action brought to a total of 13 the number of German planes which have crashed in flames following leaden bursts from the snarling, blazing guns of P-40 Warhawks, with brown hands at the controls and brown fingers pulling the triggers.

The sky battles of the week end have been described as "unmatched in violence in the Mediterranean theatre since those over North Africa last spring."

Lt. Leon Roberts (he's the Alabama one) in describing his encounther with a Focke-Wulf, said: "I was following a 'Jerry' and was weaving a lot, but I got a burst into his right wing. He flopped over on his back and headed for the ground."

In last Thursday's dog-fights, the 99th engaged Axis airmen, members of Goering's invincible German Luftwaffe, in morning and afternoon encounters. They were teamed with British Spitfires, the 75th Squadron and the Red Guerillas, another Warhawk Squadron which acquired its name while fighting in Tunisia under Colonel Philip "Flip" Cochran. (Cochran also gave the 99th its behind-the-lines training.)

The four flying outfits bagged a total of 28 planes . . . eight of them by the 99th.

CHASED ENEMY PLANES TO ROME

During the morning dogfights, members of the 99th fought so ferociously and with such daring and cunning that they chased Axis planes all the way to Rome . . . sending several of the fleeing machines crashing to earth on the outskirts of the Eternal City. In this encounter, the Red Guerillas acounted for five; the 75th shot down one and the British Spitfires got nine.

Bent on beating the Allied landing forces out of the area it has occupied south of Rome, the German air command last Thursday sent over their fighters and bombers in massed strength. Approximately 100 enemy Messerchmitts and Focke-Wulfs engaged in the assault.

As part of the protective sky umbrella which effected the German air debacle along the Cassino front some 80 miles from Rome . . . a front which Adolf Hitler had ordered the German Tenth Army to "stand or die on," the fighting 99th helped repulse the heaviest enemy air attack against the week-old bridgehead, as the Allies move ahead. 2-5-44

DREAM COMES TRUE

America's first colored combat pilots have acquitted themselves commendably on the many tactical missions engaged in during the several months that they have been assigned overseas. They had their first opportunity to catch the enemy in their gun sights, and in formation that permitted mass dog fights . . . the combat pilot's cherished dream.

It was in the air over the road to Rome, another step towards a United Nations' victory, that the 99th gave confirmation that the colored Fighter Squadron is battle-fitted to meet the challenge of those who would destroy democracy. Yes, they are combat pilots worthy of the toga.

HERO'S WIFE

Mrs. Geraldine Eagleston (above) is the proud wife of Lt. Wilson V. Eagleston, member of the famed 99th red pursuit squadron, who shot down his first plane last Thursday in an encounter with German Focke-Wulfs. Mrs. Eagleston resides at Tuskegee.

Negro Fliers Tested at Anzio

Lyerld-Telegram-New York, N. Y.

An "experiment" which demonstrated that Negro fliers "more than qualify" in the air was the way two captains of the Negro 99th Fighter Squadron today described their unit's action in giving protection to American forces at Anzio. "The record shows it was a suecessful experiment," declared Capt. Lemuel R. Custis, 28, holder of the Air Medal for 150 hours in combat flying, at Army Headquarters, 90 Church St. 6-24-44

Both Capt. Custis of Hartford, Conn., and Capt. Charles B. Hall, 23, of Brazil, Ind., hope to continue in aviation after the war. The two officers are credited with shooting down four of the 17 planes downed by their squadron over Africa, Sicily and Italy. Capt. Hall holds the DFC.

99th Pilot on a Bombing Mission

Afro-American—Baltimore, Md.

2-5-44

By ART CARTER

AFRO War Correspondent with U.S. Troops in Italy

[Copyright. Reproduction in whole or in part expressly forbidden.]

ADVANCED AIR BASE (By Mail, Censored)—Outside fleecy snowflakes fell lightly and melted on the valley terrain, already mud-soaked by three days of rain, and there was little to do in the fighter squadron's camp.

Pilots and enlisted men alike huddled in the confined warmth of their tents where heat rays poured forth from "GI" stoves filled with wood gathered in the wooded mountain area nearby.

Thus "weathered in" the pilots talked about women, wine and war: about the girls they left behind and the girls they have met in Italy; about the poor vintage of vino available in the bomb-battered villages where native life is slowly being restored to semi-normalcy; about how much longer the war will last and what they hope to do when it is over.

Shop talk broke the conversational trend when I cornered Lieut. Elwood T. Driver, 30 Fountain Avenue, Trenton, N.J., and asked him how he feels, what he thinks and what he does when he goes on a mission over the enemy lines.

I can't tell you how many pilots are here with this all-colored combat aviation unit, but Lt. Driver's story is typical of what each goes through every time operations call for a mission into Nazi-controlled territory.

He is a member of the squadron's Flight "B" which has been "alerted" for an early morning mission, and from now on the story is his:

Officers Alerted

"I am in my tent snuggled down in the sleeping bag, half asleep, half awake. It is about 0700 (7 a.m.) and in about 20 minutes I will be up and washing in the steel helmet preparatory to breakfast. Suddenly the air is filled with the roar of engines, and more roars, as the P-40 Warhawks throughout the dispersal area bark in defiance as if they, too, objected to the morning awakening.

"I lie there wondering why they are being started and preflighted at this time when the noise of a rapidly approaching Jeep bouncing across the rough terrain reaches my ears. There is a squeal of brakes as the Jeep skids to a stop outside my tent, and Capt. Hall (Capt. Charles B. Hall, Brazil, Ind.) shouts:

"'Get up, Driver and Roberts (First Lt. Leon C. Roberts, Pritchard, Ala.), you're on the alert.'

"Roberts raises up (he is my tentmate), opens one eye, frowns, utters a low sound, then falls back on the cot. 'On the alert,' I repeat to my sleepy brain, and then I spring into action as it dawns upon me—a mission is on.

Quickly I drag out my shoes from under the cot, push my feet into them, slip on the flying suit, pistol and jacket while Roberts is sliding out of bed and into his flying attire.

"We both race for operations, but I wheel around toward the tent to get my good-luck piece (wife's picture). I can't leave that.

Urgent Mission

"As we reach the operations tent breathless and still a little sleepy, we note five other officers waiting inside the tent. The operations chief, Capt. Lemuel R. Custis, has just started to speak:

"'Men, we have an urgent mission this morning. It may be a great show. Here in the town of—(pointing to the map)—are strong enemy gun positions which must be knocked out.

"'The town you see is identifiable by this river running north and south, and this railway to the west of the town. Your pin-point will be this building and this general area (he indicates on a photo map with the magnifying glass). Your planes are armed with two 250-pound bombs.' 2-5-44

Enemy Fighters

"The intelligence officer breaks in here: 'We have received reports that there are enemy fighters in this area and that very intense accurate flak has been encountered in this area.'

"We make a mental note of what he says. He continues: 'The distress call will be on channel —, call—. If you are forced down, head west for friendly territory across the river.

"The operations officer speaks again: 'It is now 0727; synchronize your watches. Take-off time is 0745; time over target, 0800. Medium bombers will be there at 0755. You are to bomb after them. Here are your ship numbers, so get your equipment together.'

Lt. Roberts Leads Flight

"We don't have much time. Lt. Roberts is leading the flight in '24.' I'm on his wing in '23'; Lt. Willie Ashley (Sumter, S.C.), is leading the second element in '29', and Lt. William H. Walker (Carbondale, Ill.) on his wing in '26'; Lt. John Rogers (Chicago) will be in '34' and Lt. Herman Lawson (Marysville, Calif.) in '35.'

"We all bundle into the Jeep with Mae West belts, helmets, parachutes and flying gear scattered all over the seats and hood, and go tearing across the field toward our planes. 'Skeets,' my plane, named for my wife, is parked near the end of the runway, so I am last out and run toward it.

"'She checks fine this morning,' says the crew chief, Sgt. Cecil A. Cousins, a likeable fellow from New York, 'bring her back okay.' He smiles as I climb on the wing and into the cockpit.

"I check everything—helmet, goggles hung over the stick, Mae West life vest hung over the gunsight, flying gloves stuck over the instrument panel, and parachute in the seat. Everything is here for instant use.

Patched Plane

"The crew chief helps me to adjust the equipment, safety straps and radio cord, then steps down off the wing. I glance at the patched-up hole in the tail from ack-ack fire and recall my first mission when I thought that bursting flak bouncing the plane around was rough weather—that was before I looked back and saw those black puffs of smoke following my tail.

"Roberts has started his engine and is taxi-ing up the ramp for the takeoff. Walker pulls out behind him, and then I pull down my goggles, give two shots of the primer, engage the starter and the engine roars into action. It sounds good. Sgt. Cousins grins and I grin back at him.

"Behind me I can see Ashley, Rogers and Lawson stretched down the runway through my mirror. It is 0744, and as I look up, Lt. Roberts is gunning the engine for the takeoff. Magnetos check okay, so I push forward on the throttle, and I, too, am racing down the matted runway for the take-off.

Wingmen in Rear

"Behind me, Ashley, Walker, Rogers and Lawson are getting in position for the take-off and turning left behind me as the distance between my leader and my ship becomes smaller. We are together now, the three element leaders in front in line abreast and we three wingmen weaving back and forth behind them. 2-5-44

"Eagerly and anxiously we search the sky for enemy aircraft—always searching. The town of X along the sea coast passes under the left wing now. We are at 8,000 feet.

"Over the air, Lt. Roberts is saying, 'Steady now . . . left turn

Prepare to Bomb

"I hope none of us zigs when we should zag, and run into ack-ack fire. Roberts calls in over the radio: 'Arm your bombs—prepare to bomb.'

"The arming handle is pulled up and at the same time Roberts pulls up and over and drops the others likewise pulling up, so I open the gun and close the distance between us so we can get in formation, and if we are jumped, fight together.

"There are four of us now, then five. Where is the sixth? Was he shot down? No, there he is circling below, trying to join us. We make one more circle, pick up Lawson and by my cockpit.

Planes 'Zoom-Up'

"Then through my sights the target appears ahead, just as lights become larger. Little lights the building looms larger. Little lights at us are winking at me from the ground below, streams of tracers are coming from my wings into the building and they are winking death for my gun fires from enemy gets larger. I yank the bomb

47a-1944

99th Pursuit Squadron

Bishop Meets Personnel Staff of 99th Squadron

Afro-American - Baltimore, Md.
47a
1-29-44

Bishop John A. Gregg (8th from left) tells Art Carter, AFRO war correspondent, about his goodwill tour while visiting staff at personnel office of the 99th Fighter Squadron in Italy. Left to right, are Cpl. Jimmy L. Williams, Bernice, La.; Sgt. Cyril O. Byron, Bronx, N.Y. S/Sgt. John P. Alexander, Waterbury, Conn.; S/Sgt. Irvin Weir, Philadelphia; Pfc. English Girardeaux, Jacksonville, Fla.; Chaplain John A. DeVeaux, military companion of the bishop; 1st Lieutenant Bernard S. Proctor, adjutant, Philadelphia; Bishop Gregg, AFRO Correspondent Carter, 1st Lieutenant Henry M. Letcher, squadron's executive officer, Washington, Sgt. S. Wesley Henderson, New York City and S/Sgt Charles Davis. Newark, N.J.

Flyers Chalk Up Record in Battle South of Rome

CALL Kansas City, Missouri
2-4-44

Fighter Squadron Distinguishes Itself in Combat; Indiana Youth Gets Two Victories on Same Day

Over the past week-end, the 99th Fighter Squadron, made up of American Negro pilots trained at Tuskegee institute, Ala., downed 12 of Hitler's Focke-Wulf 190's—eight in one day and four the next.

In the story below, Art Carter, war correspondent on duty with the 99th squadron, gives a first-hand account of the reaction of the pilots as they returned to base after their eight victories the first day. His account of the last four victories had not arrived at press time. The 99th did not lose a single plane on this mission.

By ART CARTER
War Correspondent in Italy

ADVANCED AIR BASE SOMEWHERE IN ITALY. — In a day of death dealing aerial warfare that highlighted five days of protective patrol duty for the Allied invasion of the Anzio and Nettuno beaches south of Rome, the 99th Fighter Squadron Friday blasted eight German planes out of the sky.

The squadron scored damages against four others and gained credit for two others probably damaged.

Eager, determined P-40 Warhawk pilots, long anxious for personal battle with the Luftwaffe, encountered a nest of Focke-Wulf 190's attempting to dive bomb Allied shipping and chased the Nazis in spectacular battles on both morning and afternoon missions.

It was the most history-making day of the squadron's record and it came through with triumphant colors, leaving a trail of destruction in its wake.

The squadron intercepted Jerry fighter bomber planes over assault beaches and fired away with all guns, virtually clearing the skyways of enemy aircraft trying to strafe Allied ships and troops.

The 99th was on the aggressive in every dog fight, with the Germans on the run. The only enemy firing came from ground attacks as the squadron's pilots chased the Jerries up the skyways to Rome.

Pilots scoring victories were:

CAPTAIN L. RODNEY CUSTIS, Hartford, Conn.
1ST LIEUT. WILLIE ASHLEY, Sumpter, S. C.
1ST LIEUT. LEON C. ROBERTS, Pritchard, Ala.
1ST. LIEUT. HOWARD L. BAUGH, Petersburg, Va.
1ST LIEUT. EDWARD L. TOPPINS, San Francisco.
1ST LIEUT. ROBERT W. DEIZ, Portland, Ore.
2ND LIEUT. CLARENCE W. ALLEN, Mobile, Ala.
2ND LIEUT. CHARLES P. BAILEY, Punta Gorda, Fla.
2ND. LIEUT. WILSON EAGLESON, Bloomington, Ind.

On the second successive day of fighting when the 99th squadron downed four enemy planes, two of the four were credited to Captain Charles E. Hall of Brazil, Ind. He brought down a FW 190 and an M. E.-109, bringing his total number of enemy planes to three.

Captain Hall was the first of the 99th pilots to shoot down a Nazi plane.

Let's Support the 99th!

Amsterdam News. New York, N. Y.

The all-Negro 99th Pursuit Squadron, U. S. Army Air Force covered itself with glory in the recent landing of U. S. troops on the Italian coast near Rome, when its members shot down eight Nazi bombers without losing one of its own planes or men. (Since then the squadron has increased its total to 17.) This extraordinary feat is all the more notable when it is realized that the pilots were flying P-40s, which have some bad characteristics as fighter planes well known and spoken of by American fighter pilots. 2-19-44

Though the 99th was activated as an "experiment" and though many persons still want to believe that Negroes can neither fly nor fight, the recent intrepid exploit of the 99th should silence forever the purposeful and ignorant critics of America's gallant squadron of Negro fighter pilots.

As we have stated here often before, the best way to win an argument is to perform good deeds. It is necessary for Negro fighting men to perform all their deeds well, because it is the perfect argument against those in this country who would damn them. Furthermore, it is the duty of every Negro citizen to do not only his bit, but his level best to win the war. 2-19-44

What the pilots of the 99th did over an Italian beach is their argument that they are good pilots—that race or color has nothing at all to do with men being either good or bad pilots. Let us all perform as well as the men of the 99th thereby doing our share to win the war and to give the lie to those who always want to damn us. We have the stuff and we know it.

99th Fighter Squadron Establishes Glorious Record In Italian Battle

The Bulletin
Philadelphia, Pa.

THE 99th Fighter Squadron is covering itself with glory. 2-19-44

In a copyright story (Philadelphia Record-Chicago Sun) H. R. Knickerbocker writes: **"Over the Anzio beachhead, where Allied troops are fighting one of the fiercest battles of the Italian campaign against Hitler's crack divisions bent on pushing us into the sea, our men are being protected in part by American Negro fighter pilots."**

"To date they have knocked down 16 enemy planes since the beachhead landing January 22, eight in one day. That is believed more than any other squadron in the U. S. Air Forces here can show in a similar period."

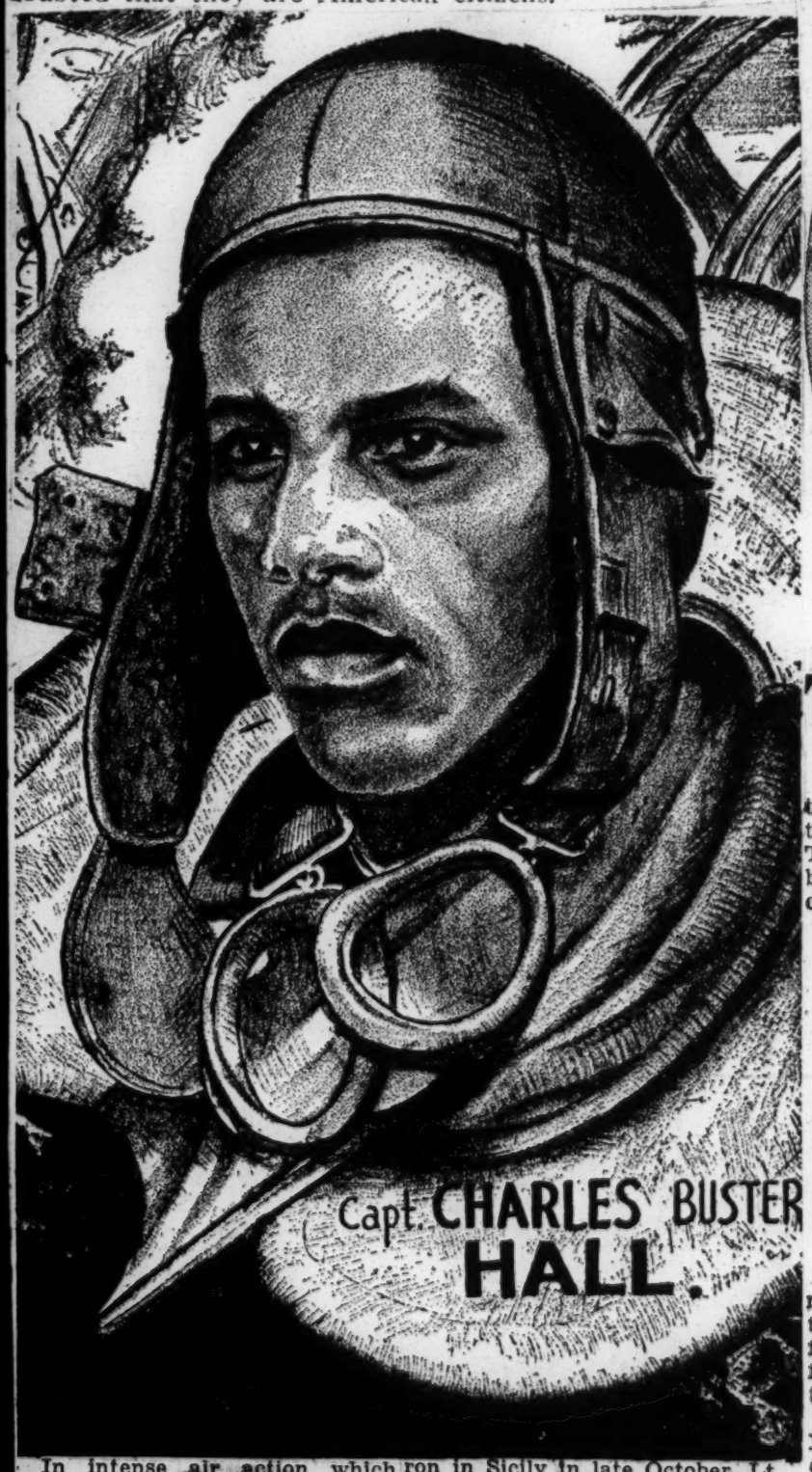
That is the record. No one believes that colored fighters are better than white. But the evidence does show that, given equal opportunity, colored fighters are equal—no better, no worse! And that is the only thing colored Americans want—equality of opportunity to serve their country.

The 99th has knocked into a cocked hat the unfounded assertions that colored people should not be trained as air fighter pilots because they were unfitted for that

type of service.

Many things have been done to break the morale of colored fighting men during the present fight for freedom. But thanks to stout hearts and an unshakable faith in the ultimate triumph of right over wrong, they march on to grand and glorious achievement.

Our prayers and hopes are with the brave boys of the 99th who, in the face of tremendous odds both at home and on the battlefronts, have proved to those who doubted that they are American citizens.



In intense air action which raged over the Anzio-Nettuno beachhead below Rome last Thursday and Friday, the 99th Pursuit Squadron shot down 12 enemy planes. First Lt. Claude Roberts, Pritchard, Ala., left, was credited with an individual victory. 2-5-44

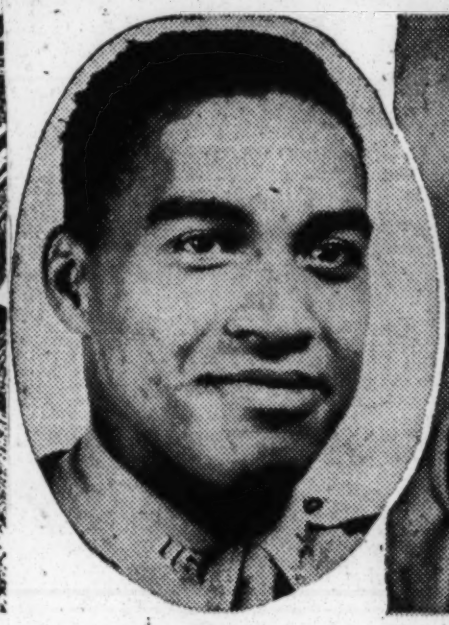
Victory was sweet to 2nd Lt. Wilson Vashon Eagleston (top, center), a raw rookie of Bloomington, Ind. Joining the squadron in Sicily in late October, Lt. Eagleston was credited with shooting down one Nazi plane.

At top, right, is Capt. Lemuel Rodney Custis, Hartford, Conn., 99th Pursuit Squadron operations officer, a senior pilot, who also bagged his first enemy plane.

When the 99th Pursuit Squadron flew over the Anzio-Nettuno beachhead below Rome last Thursday and bagged eight enemy planes, Capt. Charles (Buster) Hall, above, of Brazil, Ind., failed to make a "kill." He settled the argument the following day by shooting down two German fighters, scoring the only double of the day. Captain Hall now has a record of three Nazi planes. He was the first member of the 99th to shoot down an enemy fighter shortly after the squadron went into action last summer. This is a drawing of the captain by Staff Artist Holloway.

THEIR BLAZING GUNS SPELLED DOOM FOR ENEMY IN SKIES OVER ITALY

Courier-Pittsburg, Pa 2-5-44



LEON CLAUDE ROBERTS
First Lieutenant . . . Alabama

WILSON VASHON EAGLESTON
Second Lieutenant . . . Indiana

LEMUEL RODNEY CUSTIS
Captain . . . Connecticut

The Watchtower

By Roy Wilkins

Amsterdam News New York, N.Y.

Our Flyers Lead the Way

In this race relations business it is just as harmful to clap hands and shout too loudly over the little things as it is to gnash the teeth over the bad things. The Pollyanna optimists who always look on the bright side often do the race as much harm as the cynics who see no progress anywhere. 2-19-44

Mr. Wilkins

God knows the War and Navy departments have not done right by the dark brothers, but it does seem fair to say that in the past month the situation shows signs of getting definitely better.

First there was the release of news and pictures about the training of Negro twin-engined bomber crews at Hondo Field, Tex., and Mather Field, California. Although this training continues the pattern of segregation begun at Tuskegee, it does represent progress. Now that we have come from single-seat fighters to medium bombers, we can go on to four-engined Fortresses and Liberators. And the next step is navy flying. If our lads can fly Airacobras and Mustangs for the army, they can fly Corsairs and Hellcats for the navy.

And then there was the wonderful news from the Italian front of our 99th fighter squadron shooting down twelve Nazi planes in two days. This performance rated a cablegram of congratulations from General H. H. Arnold of the Army Air Forces to Lt. Gen. Eaker under whom the 99th serves. Behind this message from "Hap" Arnold lies a story. Arnold was not "sold" on Negro fliers. Very few men were. In the early days of the 99th overseas service in North Africa and Sicily the boys were watched like hawks and some of the mistakes they made were pounced upon by commanders. They were the mistakes white boys would make and have made in both the Atlantic and Pacific theatres of war. But the whisper got around. A national magazine took it up. The men who never had wanted Negro fliers thought the idea was finally knocked out. Arnold was said to have been "convinced" that Negro fliers were a mistake.

The 99th Goes Forward! 2-19-44

But the 99th, meanwhile, had been assigned to work with the British 8th Army in Italy and they carried out their assignments well. They never got a chance at combat with the Nazis, but they did effective blasting of targets for the British. Then came the Nettuno beachhead below Rome and the dogfights of January 27-28. Our boys got their chance and they did not fail. With their guns blazing from the slow, low-ceilinged Warhawks, they brought their own pressure on the War Department for better treatment. Their work in the slow Warhawks raises a question as to what they could do in P-38 Lightnings or P-47 Thunderbolts.

Another bit of good news is buried in the Senate. It is a bill, sponsored by the War Department, to enlarge its powers and give it control over clashes between civilians and military personnel. This will enable the department to take more positive action in protecting the Negro soldier in the southern states. This action is long overdue, for the mistreatment of Negro fighting men in Dixie has been a disgrace and the greatest single cause of bitterness among colored Americans.

Mixed Divisions Coming?!?!

Finally, there is the announcement by the Navy that it is training Negro commissioned officers. The toughest and meanest barrier in the entire armed forces thus is breached. How great or how permanent the victory will be remains to be seen.

So, brothers and sisters, progress is being made. Who knows but that if Rome holds out until July 4th we may have a mixed division?

Major Roberts Has High Praise For His Outfit

Baltimore Afro-American 6-3-44

Pilots Require All 'Your Attention'

Flyer Says Nazi

WASHINGTON—(S N S) — The 25-year-old commander of the all-Negro Ninety-ninth Fighter Squadron, Major George S. Roberts, has high praise for his outfit.

He stated here Friday that his said, with three enemy planes to his credit.

The squadron, now in North Africa, went overseas in March, 1942, and went into action last summer. Roberts was in April, 1943. He wears the Air Medal with Two Oak Leaf Clusters.

Italy, has shot down 17 enemy pilots now are not as experienced as those encountered a year ago, but that "the ones you do meet require all your attention."

Roberts, whose home is Fairmont, W. Va., was commissioned

Captain Charles B. Hall, of Brazil, Ind., is the pilot with the most scorer for the squadron, having

outfit has flown all types of combat missions in which his bat missions—bomber, escort, dive bombing, patrol for beachheads, and strafing—since it went into P-40 fighter because "it is rugged, it gets you there and brings you back."

He said he thought the German ground forces in Africa a year ago, now doing close support of Allied ground forces in the planes, scored three probables and damaged six other planes in more than 3,000 combat sorties.

47a-1944

Suggestion Made By Urban League

World-Memphis, Tenn.
6-30-44

NEW YORK CITY — (SNS) — The National Urban League has suggested to Secretary of War Stimson that a plan be developed which would make it possible for members of the 99th Pursuit Squadron to visit industrial plants in some of our principal cities.

Under the proposed plan, returning members of this all-Negro Squadron would concentrate their visits in aviation plants, and would thus see and talk with the men and the women who produce the planes which are winning the war.

The suggestion originated in the Chicago Urban League, and was passed on to Secretary Stimson by Lester B. Granger, Executive Secretary of the National Urban League.

The full text of the letter follows:

"The Honorable Henry L. Stimson
War Department
Washington, D. C.
Dear Sir:

The National Urban League, as you perhaps know, has for the past six months conducted a study of the work being done by Negroes in more than three hundred war plants. The findings of this Industrial Relations Laboratory are being made available to both management and labor. We have discovered that an unsuspectedly large number of skilled Negroes are at work in these plants, and that in most plants a commendable program of integration is in operation.

We wish to pass on to you a suggestion which originated in the Chicago Urban League and which is in part based on our experiences in the Industrial Relations Laboratory. We are proposing for your consideration a plan which would make it impossible for returning members of the 99th Pursuit Squadron to visit industrial plants in some of our major cities, particularly those plants engaged in plane construction. Such visits would make it possible for these valiant fighting men to see the C-54 Skymasters and the B-29 Superfortresses under construction, and would give workmen in the plants an opportunity to see men about whom they have heard and read.

It is difficult to estimate at this point the morale-building effect of such tours as we are proposing. At a time when we are concentrating our energies on the early ending of the war, and the successful culmination of the Fifth War Loan Drive, visits of this type would inspire the public as well as the employees in the plants visited. I need not point out how stimulating these tours would be to the entire Negro population in this country. 6-30-44

The National Urban League offers its services in contacting the plants which might be visited, in the setting up of schedules, and in working out many of the details to which attention would need to be given.

May we send a representative of the National Urban League to discuss this proposal either with you or some designated official in the near future? We feel that much of the effectiveness of the proposal relates to its being given immediate attention.

Very truly yours,
(Signed)
Lester B. Granger
Executive Secretary
National Urban League

99th Pursuit Squadron

Major Roberts, '99th' Commander, Has Yet To See 13-Month-Old Son

Courier-Pittsburgh, Pa.
3-4-44

CHARLESTON, W. Va.—Maj. George Spencer Roberts, 25-year-old hero-flier, wants to help knock all the Germans out of the skies so he can get home to 13-month-old George Spencer, Jr., whom he has not seen. The commanding officer of the famed 99th fighter squadron of the Mediterranean war theatre constantly writes his attractive 24-year-old wife, here at 1706 Kemp avenue, that he wants to hold his son in his arms for the first time.

Just this week, he wrote from his base that he has been confined to an Army hospital with a cold—contracted ironically, when he was transferred from tent living quarters to one with a real roof. It was "too confining," he wrote.

DELAYED LETTERS

Mrs. Roberts writes twice a week, but the major wrote that he has not heard from her in a month.

A campus romance at West Virginia State college culminated in their marriage. He received a degree there in 1939 and she was graduated the following year.

George Spencer, Jr., points to his daddy's picture with childish pride. All day long he repeats:

"My daddy!"

Says Mrs. Roberts: 3-4-44

SERIOUS ABOUT TASK

"My husband is quite serious about the way he does his job, and the way he conducts himself, because it means so much to Negroes in general and naturaly I was thrilled when I learned that General Arnold has commended him and his squadron for their fine work in the air."

(Gen. H. H. Arnold recently commended the all-Negro 99th Squadron for bringing down 12 Nazi planes in two days.)

"My superior officers are tops," wrote Major Roberts. "They have encouraged my squadron right along—and we need encouragement."

Major Roberts has been on a "pep" talk tour for both white and Negro fliers, Mrs. Roberts learned via Uncle Sam's mail.

INTERNATIONAL HERO

Since Major Roberts' squadron exploits were told to millions of Americans through newspaper and magazine articles, his Charleston home has been the scene of many visits from friends. Mrs. Roberts' telephone constantly rings — the calls congratulating her on her husband's heroic war participation.

Naturally, his kindly mother-in-law, Mrs. Margaret Adams, shares in her daughter's happiness.

WANTS MAIL 3-4-44

His most recent letter told Mrs. Roberts that the Germans are not bothering him, "but unless I get letters from home I'll get heart failure." (He was referring to the absence of letters for a month, despite the fact that Mrs. Roberts writes at least twice weekly.)

She figures the mail delay this way:

"Maybe George's outfit moves around so much in the battle areas that my mail has not caught up with him yet. When it does, he'll get a mail sack full of love from me—and George Spencer, Jr."

Major Roberts received his first flight trajning in Charleston and later, trained in July, 1941, at Tuskegee, Ala., with the first Army school for Negro pilots. His wife last saw him at Thanksgiving, 1942.

JUNIOR KNOWS HIS FATHER . . . THE FIGHTING MAJOR

Courier-Pittsburgh, Pa.
3-4-44

"It's daddy," screams 13-month-old George Spencer Roberts, Jr., as his mother points to a picture of his heroic father, Major George Spencer Roberts, 25-year-old commander of the 99th Fighter Squadron. The major, now in Italy, has not seen his husky son. Mother and son reside in Fairmont, W. Va.

2 More Pilots Forced Down

Afro American
Baltimore, Md.

Both, However, Get Back to Their Base

3-4-44

99th ENJOYS LULL

Jamison Has Flight Quota, Coming Home

By ART CARTER
AFRO War Correspondent with U.S. Troops in Italy

[Copyright. Reproduction in whole or in part expressly forbidden.]

ALLIED PRESS HEADQUARTERS IN ITALY (By Cable, Censored) — Although a lull was evident in air support this week, largely due to weather conditions, pilots of the 99th Fighter Squadron were involved in two forced landings.

Lts. Heber Houston of Detroit and Pearlee Saunders of Bessemer, Ala., made these landings on the beachhead's emergency strip after their planes developed engine trouble, but both have returned to the seat of operations.

Jamison Released

Capt. Clarence Jamison of Cleveland, a flight leader in the squadron, will soon be on his way home. The first member of the 99th to complete the allotted missions, he received his release from the squadron on Saturday and is eagerly looking forward to his return.

Captain Jamison, who has sixty-seven missions to his credit, is the pilot who landed in No Man's

Land during the hot Anzio Beach aerial duel.

Broadcast Disappointing

There was little activity around the airdromes over the week end, but the broadcast details kept me on the run. Actually we stayed up all night to make rehearsals and 4:22 a.m. time.

The broadcast from here was actually made, but we learned disappointedly that a mixup in signal transmission marred reception in the States. Hence the script had to be read from the New York studio. 3-4-44

It was a sad blow to all participants, as they had looked forward to an opportunity for their families to hear their voices for the first time since leaving home.

Pfc. Woodall I. Marsh was most disappointed, as he has two children that he had hoped would hear his voice.

Maj. George S. Roberts, commanding officer of the 99th, had envisioned the program as a chance for his 11-month-old son, "Spanky, Jr.," to hear his voice for the first time. They have never seen each other.

Marsh Not Frightened

Marsh, making his initial radio appearance, was not "mike" frightened because "Nothing frightens me after my experiences at the front."

Marsh was accompanied to the studio by Lt. Roscoe Holman of Chicago, Sgt. Raymond Williams of New Castle, Pa.

1ST LT. SAMUEL W. BRUCE OF SEATTLE POPULAR FOOTBALL STAR--ATHLETE KILLED WHEN PARACHUTE FAILS HIM

Northwest Enterpuse-
Seattle, Washington - 3-1-44

1st LT. SAMMY BRUCE

(The death of Sammy Bruce, missing in action since the latter part of January, was confirmed Sunday in a message to his mother, Mrs. Martha Davis, from the War Department.—Editor.)

By ART CARTER
(War Correspondent in Italy)

ADVANCED AIR BASE, SOMEWHERE IN ITALY.—Delayed—The 99th Fighter Squadron lost one pilot on the week-end of Jan. 27-29 when the squadron made its enviable record of destroying 12 Nazi planes in two days.

Missing in action is 1st Lieut. Samuel W. Bruce of 319 Twelfth Ave., Seattle, Wash. Bruce was in the thick of the air battle, other pilots reporting that he was chasing Jerries when enemy flak disabled his plane. He bailed out but his parachute failed to open completely.

Lieut. Bruce, former CIAA football star, was one of the charter pilots with the 99th squadron. He was popular along the East coast in the U. S. A., for his athletic prowess while a student at the North Carolina A. and T. college at Greensboro. He was a quarterback on the football team for four years and twice won conference honors.

Laste September Lt. Bruce bailed out over Sicily and miraculously escaped injury.

He was flying his 57th mission when his 'chute failed to open. He was looking forward to completing his string of 80 missions and returning home to see his baby born since he has been overseas. Bruce's wife, Mrs. Grace T. Bruce, and the baby are now in Greensboro, N. C. — Kansas City Cull.

DANGER IS OLD STUFF TO NEGRO PURSUIT PILOT

Tribune—Chicago, Ill.
7-16-44

On his 105th combat mission over enemy territory Lt. Clarence W. Allen shook hands with danger again—they'd met before, but never so intimately.

Lt. Allen.

It was on a strafing mission over Italy that Lt. Allen, squadron flight leader, was shot down by enemy flak. His plane, a P-40 Warhawk, caught fire, but he flew it until he was forced to bail out at 4,000 feet. He came down 50 yards from a German truck.

The 24 year old pilot threw away his flying equipment and ran for a woods adjoining the highway, the Germans following close behind yelling for him to surrender. Allen kept running and hid in the woods. He flattened himself against the ground and escaped from a 10 minute machine gun barrage aimed at him. 7-16-44

Crawls Mile Uphill—and Then Back!

It rained that night, but in the darkness he crawled on his stomach a mile uphill toward an Italian farm house. As he approached the top of the hill he spotted German sentries and carefully retraced his way back down the hill.

He discovered he was between two German sentries. Hiding out all night, he cautiously wormed his way to a small hillside where, by daylight, he could watch German machine gunners, sometimes hidden only five feet away from him.

Finally, after one tremendous machine gun spray directed at approaching soldiers, the Germans ceased firing and retreated. Allen recognized the allied tanks, but remained hidden in the wooded shelter until he could crawl safely thru the thorny branches and reach French troops bivouacked in a ravine near-by.

Has Minor Injuries.

The 99th squadron flight leader was taken to an American division, where he spent his third night before returning to his air base—unharmed except for a minor injury on his neck from his parachute strap and lacerated palms and knees from his thorny crawl. 7-16-44

Lt. Allen, the son of Dr. and Mrs. Clarence W. Allen Sr., 4758 Champlain av., is a graduate of Hyde Park High school and attended Fisk university, Nashville, Tenn. He graduated in an accounting course from the Central Y. M. C. A.

On his fifth mission he downed a Nazi plane 500 feet away with no injury to himself or his P-40. The pilot with the charmed life is expected home on a furlough soon.

99th's 17 NAZI PLANES A RECORD: KNICKERBOCKER

Bee—Chicago, Ill.
2-20-44

The 99th's record of 17 enemy planes destroyed, four probables and six damaged is thought to be a record ahead of any squadron, H. R. Knickerbocker, chief of the Chicago Sun foreign service opined in a feature article appearing Monday in the Sun.

The article concluded a two-story series which appeared in Sunday and Monday editions of the fast-growing Chicago daily.

The noted correspondent chronicling of the exploits of the now famous 99th Fighter Squadron, first all-Negro flying unit in the regular two ounces of whiskey nation's history featured their heroic performances at Anzio-Nettuno beachhead during the Allied drive on Rome.

Marked Combative Spirit

"Throughout these polits' ac- counts of their fighting there runs a sign of strong combative spirit," he said. "It doesn't seem to matter what part of the country these boys come from, north or south, their battle attitude is the kind of principle. They say they fly better if they don't drink at all."

While telling about the quiet pride on the pilots' faces when they tell how they removed one more enemy of mankind from this life, Knickerbocker pointed out that one plane doesn't seem very much until you reflect that if every allied fighter pilot had just one enemy plane to his credit, there would be no German air force.

Few squadrons work harder than the 99th. Each individual is flying now an average of one mission a day, and the entire squadron is sharing the work with whites daily, patrolling the Anzio-Nettuno beachhead so that allied forces below can be, at least, protected from air attack while they battle

2-20-44

Lt. McCrumby Dangled Head Downward for 3,000 Feet

Ninety-ninth fighter shot down over beachhead near Rome, dangled by one foot while plane fell 3,000 feet. By a miracle he kicked free and opened his parachute.

$1,000 Bond For Each Plane Bought By 99th

World-Memphis, Tenn.

6-27-44

$12,000 Worth Purchased In A Single Day

Major Roberts Tells Of Fine Spirit Of Men

WASHINGTON, D. C.—(SNS) — Negro pilots of the 99th Pursuit Squadron, now busy dive-bombing and Strafing the fleeing Nazis in the Levante sector of northern Italy, are striking double bows at the enemy, the Treasury Department revealed this week.

In addition to making regular salary allotments for War Bond purchases, the Negro fliers celebrate each air victory by purchasing a $1,000 bond for every enemy destroyed by a member of the squadron.

This sidelight on the unit's activities was reported to the Treasury Department this week by Major George S. Roberts, commanding officer of the famous squadron who completed a year of combat duty in North Africa, Sicily and Italy on the day that Rome fell to the Allies. 6-27-44

TELLS OF POLICY

Major Roberts, now home on furlough, discussed the squadron's exploits while visiting the Army Air Forces War Bond Show, "Shot from the Sky," on the Monument Grounds in Washington, D. C.

The $1,000-a-plan campaign was instituted by the unit during the Fourth War Loan drive the commanding officer said, when the 99th Pursuit Squadron was battling German Fockewulf 190s over the Anzio-Nettuno beachhead in Italy. The men met their self-imposed quotas for several days and then came January 27. On that day the 99th pilots got their first good crack at the Luftwaffe and shot down 12 enemy planes!

"We were determined to keep our promise of $1,000 in War Bonds for each plane downed," Major Roberts realled, "even if most of the men in the outfit, including flying officers as well as ground crew members already had made heavy allotments for War Bonds out of their monthly pay. Some of them could not really afford to buy more, but practically everybody added something to his already substantial allotment for this special drive. Nobody wanted to be left out. 6-26-44

"It was a tough five-day campaign, but we raised the $12,000."

Prior to the January 22 engagement, Major Roberts had rashly promised to top any contribution made in the unit.

"I had a pretty hard time doing it" he grinned, "But I managed it somehow."

Aerial victories scored by the squadron have served to boost the morale of the outfit considerably Major Roberts said. The 99th had lnog been recognized as one of the highly specialized work as dive top outfits in the theatre in such bombing and strafing and providing close cover for advancing infantry. But this kind of work did not win headlines, and the men wanted a chance to engage in dog fights in order to establish their reputation beyond doubt.

BOOSTS MORALE

"That day over the Anzio-Nettuno beachhead was the turning point," Major Roberts continued. "It was a big morale booster not only for us but for thousands of Negro service troops in the theatre. The entire area was agog with our exploits and these Negro service troops were popping buttons off their tunics everywhere you looked. 6-26-44

"They were as proud of us as we were of ourselves. Simply to show up in the streets of some bomb-scarred or shell-pocked village would mean a few guarded looks and then recognition, followed by immediate buzzing and whispering. The gold leaf on my collar attracted attention, too. It caused many double takes among persons who saw it and that even includede the native Italians. When I left the boys they were in tip-top shape and so confident of themselves that they were making plans to invest several more thousands dollars in War Bonds in addition to the $1,000-a-plane."

Major Roberts Has High Praise For His Outfit

World-Memphis, Tenn.

6-9-44

Flyer Says Nazi Pilots Require All 'Your Attention'

WASHINGTON—(S N S) — The 25-year-old commander of the all-Negro Ninety-ninth Fighter Squadron, Major George S. Roberts, has high praise for his outfit.

He stated here Friday that his outfit has flown all types of combat missions—bomber, escort, dive bombing, patrol for beachheads, and strafing—since it went into action in North Africa a year ago.

The squadron, now doing close support of Allied ground forces in Italy, has shot down 17 enemy planes, scored three probables and damaged six other planes in more than 3,000 combat sorties.

Captain Charles B. Hall, of Brazil, Ind., is the present high scorer for the squadron, Roberts said, with three enemy planes to his credit. 6-9-44

Major Roberts told a news conference that in the type of flying his outfit is doing he prefers the P-40 fighter because "it is rugged, it gets you there and brings you back."

He said he thought the German pilots now are not as experienced as those encountered a year ago, but that "the ones you do meet require all your attention."

Roberts, whose home is Fairmont, W. Va., was commissioned in March, 1942, and went overseas in April, 1943. He wears the Air Medal with Two Oak Leaf Clusters, earned in 78 missions in which his ship was hit 73 times, although he never was injured. 6-9-44

Asked what the reception of the Negro outfit was, he replied:
"There wasn't any racial angle. We went over, got our training, moved up and went to work."

Tells About Fighter Squad

Major George Spencer Roberts, of Fairmont, West Virginia, Commanding Officer of the 99th Fighter Squadron now operating in Italy as a part of the 12th U. S. Army Air Force, is pictured in a conference room at the Pentagon Building, Washington, D. C., on June 1, 1944, as he explained details of his squadron's combat experiences to members of the press and radio. The 25-year-old flier, in the United States for a rest, has completed 78 missions without injury, although his ships have been hit by flak 73 times. He has received the Air Medal with two Oak Leaf Clusters. (Photo by Army Air Forces.)

For Even-Handed Justice

Daily World - Atlanta, Ga. 6-30-44

"Some of us are interested in military aviation and others in commercial, but we all want as broad a span of possibilities as we can get," said Captain Charles B. Hall, returned ace pilot of the Ninety-ninth Fighter Pursuit Squadron, who, with his companion, Captain Lemuel R. Custis, were interviewed last week by the New York Times.

The pilots of the Ninety-ninth Squadron, operating in the Mediterranean area since April, 1943, talked freely on the impressions gained by Negro soldiers and servicemen in the war theatres, dismissed their proud records of downing awo Nazi Focke-wulf 190's seventeen enemy planes, and set forth the attitude and expectation of the more than 700,000 Negro servicemen who will be returning after the war.

Asked to talk further upon the work of his outfit, Captain Hall made a statement, which in his own words, typified the feeling of our boys when he said, ':I am more interested in what opportunities Negroes will have after the war. I believe the Negro is vitally concerned with what post-war conditions will be, and there are so many Negroes in the far-flung corners of the earth who are getting a new slant on things". 6-30-44

It is undoubtedly true that Negroes have suffered greatly because of the inconveniences of inequality of opportunities in nearly all phases of American Life. It has been true since the days of slavery, it is still true today. Yet, it would be expecting far too much patience on the part of our returning servicemen to continue to be happy under denial of such privileges to them. They are right when it is stated that having been in many parts of the earth fighting against the dangers seen and unseen, "they will have a different slant on things". All soldiers and servicemen will, whether white or black.

What every American soldier should expect and has a right to expect, is an unlimited opportunity to develop his potentialities and talents fully without restriction as to occupation or race. That has not been true and it is a marvel of this generation that our servicemen have been able to develope so speedily without any previous experiences with military science.

99th Pilot Kicks Free and Opens Parachute

Afro-American
Baltimore, Md.

Lt. McCrumby, in Hospital, Tells of Miracle Jump Near Rome

2-19-44

By ART CARTER

AFRO War Correspondent with U.S. Troops in Italy

[Copyright. Reproduction in whole or in part expressly forbidden.]

SOMEWHERE IN ITALY—(By Cable, Censored)—Falling 3,000 feet while suspended by one foot from a diving plane traveling 350 miles an hour, then parachuting the remaining 1000 feet to safety, was the death-defying experience of 2nd Lieut. George McCrumby of Fort Worth, Texas.

McCrumby, 26, failed to return to the 99th Fighter Squadron's base on February 5 — the day 1st Lt. Elwood Driver knocked down a Nazi plane and Capt. Clarence Jamison was shot down over No Man's Land, 300 yards from German territory and scrambled to friendly soil.

Details of his harrowing aerial feat were unfolded to me from a hospital cot where the Tuskegee-trained pilot is recuperating from minor bruises sustained in the gruelling ordeal. 2-19-44

Plane Hit by Flak

McCrumby was flying Capt. Jamison's wing when the two became involved in a fight with six German FW 190's and trouble ensued, his ship being disabled by ack ack fire.

"Something hit underneath the ship," McCrumby recalled, "then another burst cracked the side of my cockpit, plunging the plane into a dive at 4,000 feet. I tried to pull out, but I had no control. The elevators had been knocked out. I had no alternative but to jump.

"I tried the left side, but the slip stream knocked me back. Then I tried the right side and got half way out when again the slip stream threw me against the fuselage. I struggled until all but my right foot was free and dangled from the diving plane until the wind turned the ship at about 1000 feet and shook me loose.

Rip Cord Elusive

"I reached for the rip cord six times before finding it, but my parachute opened immediately, landing me safely in a cow pasture." 2-19-44

British soldiers from a nearby anti-aircraft unit rushed McCrumby to the Anzio Beach Field Dispensary. Subsequently he spent four days in an evacuation hospital where the sound of shell-fire resounded daily and nightly.

Recently he was transferred to a general hospital, where he is nursing scratch wounds of the face and right leg, and a sprained ankle, the only injuries from his eerie episode.

Wants Another Chance

The 155-pound pilot declared: "I couldn't believe it was my time to die, but several times it looked like my finish, as the ship lost altitude fast before I was untangled. It was diving at 350 miles an hour. There I was hanging like a broken tree limb."

Three of us had driven thirty miles through a hail and wind storm to see the missing pilot.

Capt. Henry M. Letcher suggested that McCrumby would get the Purple Heart. Capt. Bernards Proctor reminded him that he was now a member of the Caterpillar Club, mythical organization of pilots who bail out and live to tell the story. But McCrumby wasn't interested. He had but one thing to say: "All I want is to get back into the air. I must get a Jerry now." 2-19-44

He needs a new pair of GI shoes, as the heel and sole of his right shoe were ripped off in the fall. McCrumby joined the 99th last August in Sicily, and has thirty-five missions to his credit. He registered a damaged plane on January 27.

Youngest 99th Pilot Prisoner

Afro American
Baltimore, Md.

—BULLETIN—

The War Department this week reported that Lt. Floyd A. Thompson of the 99th Fighter Squadron, missing in action since June 29, is a German prisoner of war. His mother, Mrs. James M. Thompson, has been so notified.

By ART CARTER

AFRO War Correspondent with U.S. Troops in Italy

[Copyright. Reproduction in whole or in part expressly forbidden.]

ADVANCED AIRBASE IN ITALY. — (Delayed) — The final chapter in the 99th Fighter Squadron's brilliant record of bombing was marked with sorrow as Second Lt. Floyd A. Thompson, youngest pilot in the unit, was reported missing in action on June 29. 7-22-44

Thompson, who celebrated his twenty-first birthday June 7, was one of a flight of eight which attacked a German railroad convoy near Cesena.

Engine Trouble Blamed

Pilots who flew the same mission reported intense small arms fire from enemy ground forces in the vicinity. However, it is thought that Thompson's plane was bothered by engine trouble, as it served his safe landing by forced to bail out in the vicinity of the target.

Was on 44th Mission

Lt. Clarence Dart, who gave Thompson sought to return to base, but after flying a few miles the plane stalled and went into a dive. At 3,500 feet, Thompson's pilot bailed out and landed safely in a valley.

Thompson, who eight days before had been elevated to deputy flight commander, was flying his forty-fourth mission since joining the squadron last April 10. He is a resident of London, W.Va., and son of Mrs. James M. Thompson.

Capt. Robert Hall, right, with singer Hazel Scott at a recent War Bond rally (story above).

20 mm shells are color blind

PM—New York, N.Y.

ON OUR WAY TO VISIT the first Negro flier to shoot down an enemy plane in this war, we passed a newsstand at 125th St. and Seventh Ave. Inside, all alone, sat a small colored boy singing, "by the dawn's early light, what so proudly we hailed." His voice was high and penetrating and we could hear it faintly even after we had entered the lobby of the nearby Hotel Theresa. 7-23-44

When we got up to Room 905, the door was opened by a short young man with very square shoulders—Capt. Robert Hall. He extended his hand and laughed. "I'm glad you came, sir," he said. "PM is all right. It sticks its neck out."

The bed was rumpled and Capt. Hall smoothed down the spread. "I been trying to catch up," he said. "They sure bear down on me here. I haven't had a full night's sleep since I got back from Italy."

In a spot in North Africa

Capt. Hall wears the Distinguished Flying Cross and the Air Medal. He told us that as a fighter pilot with the all-colored 99th Fighter Squadron he had flown on 108 combat missions. The 99th worked hard in North Africa, he said, but got little opportunity to bag planes.

"The people at home think that's the only thing that counts," he added. "Our strafing and dive-bombing didn't make the headlines and a lot of folks began to think the whole idea of a colored fighter squadron was a mistake. They thought so from the beginning, as far as that goes. They just don't believe a Negro can fly. In North Africa, we were on the spot. We just had to wait. We got going in the Sicily invasion. Then came the Anzio show and we went all out."

We asked how it felt to shoot down an enemy plane.

"I don't think about it in personal terms," he said. "If it's my job to strafe him, I strafe him. If it's my job to kill him, I kill him. That's all."

Capt. Hall told about a day the squadron had stood review for Gen. Eisenhower. "Col. Davis told him I had shot down a plane that morning. When the General reached me, he stopped and held out his hand. He said something but I don't know what it was. I could see he was trying to make it easy for me to talk to him, but it didn't work."

Capt. Hall decided to become a flier when he was nine, he told us. His parents lived in Brazil, Ind., in a house near the airport. It was there that young Robert used to watch the weekly homecomings of a certain Col. Sterley.

"I'd go down to the field with his nephew and watch the Colonel land in his old Army biplane. Seeing him roar in across the field used to get me all hepped up. I thought, 'Boy, that's for me!'"

7-23-44

'No color line overseas'

During his third year at college, Hall was notified that he was eligible for pilot training at Tuskegee. He went, then was sent overseas with the 99th. He served 14 months as a squadron flight leader, fighting in the North African, Sicilian and Italian campaigns. He was returned to the States on a furlough just before the fall of Rome.

"Have you run into any discrimination personally since you've been back?" we asked.

"No," he said. "I haven't been south." He laughed a little and shook his head.

Capt. Hall said that the members of the 99th had been treated "just like anybody else" by other fliers overseas. "When they saw we knew our job, they didn't pay any attention to our color.

"I've flown on combat missions with white boys many times," he went on. "They've often gone out with us. In the war, you can't tell what color the fellow next to you is. He's just an American flier. Maybe you're assigned to protect him, or he is covering for you. A 20-mm cannon on a German plane doesn't pick you out according to color, and the boys know it."

99th Hero Greeted Home

Argus—St. Louis, Mo.

PITTSBURGH, Pa., June 26—Captain James T. Wiley, of the 99th Pursuit Squadron, who less than a month ago was exposing himself to flak as often as three times a day while dive-bombing the enemy's gun positions in the Casino area of Central Italy, was welcomed home by residents of Pittsburgh last week. Captain Wiley is in this country on leave.

7-7-44

The celebration was a feature of the Fifth War Loan drive in the "Smoky City". It was sponsored jointly by the Pittsburgh Courier and the Citizens War Bond Committee, and, many bonds were sold. Captain Wiley received from Mrs. Jessie Vann, treasurer of the Pittsburgh Courier, a $500 bond as a gift of the Citizens Committee.

Smile Of Victory

1st Lt. Leon C. Roberts

"I was following and was weaving a lot but I got a burst into his right wing and he flopped over on his back and into the ground," said this pilot of the 99th Fighter Squadron in Italy after he destroyed an enemy plane on January 27, the day his squadron downed eight Nazi aircraft. The 99th is equipped with P-40 Warhawks (fighter - bombers). U. S. Army Air Force photo.

Bee—Chicago, Ill.
2-20-44
47a

Fighter Group 'One of Finest Air Machines'

Call—Kansas City, Mo.

99th Now Under Col. Ben Davis In P-51 Mustangs

7-21-44

By ART CARTER
(War Correspondent)

ROME.—Major General Nathan F. Twining, commander of the Mediterranean Allied strategic air force Thursday, July 13, especially praised fighter group commander, Col. Benjamin O. Davis, during a press conference at which he pointed out the military value of Germany bombings by his force.

Finest Machines

Making specific reference to the Negro group now flying P-51 Mustangs as escort for big bombers pounding Nazi oil installations in Rumania, Hungary and Austria, the general pointed out that the all-colored group had flown only 10 missions in this new work, but was "coming along fine."

Continuing, he said, "It is one of the finest fighting machines in the world," adding that losses had been much less than anticipated as with all groups doing similar aerial jobs.

General Twining outlines how escort planes had played an important role in protecting bombers hitting hot targets in Munich, Polesti and Vienna, where the bulk of German oil refineries are located. In the area covered by the force, within a 700-mile range from Foggia, he emphasized that 34 per cent of all Nazi crude oil and 50 per cent of all synthetic oil is refined. In addition the bombers hit marshalling yards in the same areas, thus crippling the enemy's supply as well as oil production.

7-21-44

Escorts for Bombers

Groups fly an average of 18 missions per month, depending upon favorable weather, and each target is a hot one for bombers and escort planes, the general declared. Fighter opposition is still strong as the Huns are fighting to the bitter end.

He emphasized that while fighter escorts are primarily protectors for bombers, they must go on the offense and attack enemy fighters apparently playing a hoarding game, attempting to save their pilots and planes as they make only infrequent attacks, mostly trying to draw out fighters to allow their deadly long-range ME410s to attack. The group has met these tactics very effectively, he concluded.

In one aggressive show on its third mission the group knocked down five Nazi planes and later destroyed a German coastal craft. Now, with the addition of the pioneer fighter squadron to the unit, the group represents the largest single fighter group in this theater. General Twining also outlined the importance and success of shuttle-bomber runs to Russia on which Mustangs are utilized as escorts, but gave no indication that the group would participate in such missions.

7-21-44

Message from Stimson

At the same time a message

...om Henry L. Stimson, secretary of war, was released, in which he regretted his inability to visit the force's fields. Stimson wrote, "The work of the strategic air force has not only curtailed the power of our German enemy in Rumania, Hungary and Austria, but at the same time has effected the union of allied forces of the west with the great armies of Russia approaching from the east."

With reference to the tactical air force in which the pioneer Negro squadron played an important role prior to its new assignment, Stimson said, "The superb work of the first tactical air force in support of the ground armies in Italy is already a matter of history, and we at home are supremely confident of the victorious finish which it will make possible."

99th Squad Air Hero To Teach At Tuskegee

Tribune — Philadelphia, Pa.
9-30-44

TUSKEGEE, Ala.—(ANP)—With his new assignment to the fighter transition training section under Lt. Col. Donald G. McPherson, Capt. Charles B. Hall, hailed as the first colored American flier to shoot down a Nazi plane in aerial combat, returned quietly to army life last week after receiving the honors of a returning hero. Capt. Hall will now pass on his battle knowledge to others as an instructor at the Tuskegee Army Air force school here.

Flop Corkin' Rates 99th

Daily World
ATLANTA, Ga.
4-3-44

A Collection Of The Best

Famed Aviator Cartoonist Pays Tribute To Race Flyers

TUSKEGEE, Ala. — (ANP) — "A collection of born dive bombers," was the compliment paid the famed 99th by the world's greatest dive bombing expert, Lt. Col. Phillip G. Cochran, the original "Flip Corkin" in the cartoon, "Terry and the Pirates." Cochran recently flew over North Africa with the 99th and during the trip he taught the crew many a combat trick.

A recent article in the London edition of Yank gave high praise to the 99th. It spoke of the high I. Q. of the 99th and stated that "they are serious and eager about their assignments" and that all of them are conscious of the role the war has thrust upon them. "They enjoy making a fool out of Hitler," the story said.

The article further disclosed the fact that the average age of the squadron is 23, and that they boast having the finest poker players in the army and the best chow. "The cooks," it said, "are former dietitians who do things with Spam and G-rations that visiting war correspondents say are impossible."

99th's First Wounded Officer Returns Home

Courier — Pittsburgh, Pa.
3-4-44

TUSKEGEE ARMY AIR FIELD, Ala.—Emerging from the Mediterranean theatre of operations as the first member of the 99th Fighter Squadron to receive the Purple Heart award, First Lt. Thomas M. Malone, Air Corps, of Detroit, Mich., visited Tuskegee Army Air field recently. First Lieutenant Malone was at Tuskegee while on leave from the Army Convalescent hospital at Coral Gables, Fla. He served as supply officer of the 336th Service Group Squadron which is attached to the 99th Fighter Squadron. A trifle thinner and with the strain of days spent in combat still showing in his mild brown eyes, First Lieutenant Malone was discovered by old friends to be as jocular as ever.

DANGER INVOLVED

It all happened like this: The advance of the British Eighth Army, supported by the Negro Fighter Squadron, had been so rapid that the ground echelon of the 99th received orders to move up to another sector.

First Lieutenant Malone and his men were instructed to get a store of vitally important supplies to a proposed advance base without delay. They realized the danger involved—that the Germans were certain to deploy troops covering their retreat.
3-4-44

After issuing precise instructions to his men, First Lieutenant Malone set out with a small party in a cargo truck. The truck hurtled over the shell-pocked road. Suddenly the vehicle was rocked by a terrific explosion—it had set off a land mine planted by the retreating Nazis. The occupants of the truck were thrown to the ground unconscious.
3-4-44

The officer regained consciousness while propped-up in a hospital behind the lines. Slowly he realized what had happened. In answer to his insistent demands, he was informed that his men had pushed the supplies through and on time. First Lieutenant Malone smiles as best he could. He could rest easy now because the mission had been completed.

Sergeant Tells How Unit Disabled Three Tanks

Tribune — Detroit, Mich.
4-15-44

Planes Swoop Down To 300 Feet

WASHINGTON, D.C.—An infantryman, back in this country under the Army's rotation plan after 18-months' service overseas, related to officials of the War department today how the Ninety-ninth Fighter Squadron swooped down through a hail of heavy flak and knocked out three enemy tanks on the Allied Fifth Army front in Italy.

Sgt. William H. Snider, 27, of Baldwin, Md., a platoon sergeant in theT hird Infantry division, told the story. He took part in the invasion of North Africa and Sicily, fought in Tunisia and close to Cassino, and was recently in action at the Anzio beachhead.

The returned doughboy went through months of combat without being wounded, though he spent 21 days in a hospital with sprains of the ankle and hip after an artillery shell landed eight feet from him at Mount Rotondo, Italy.
4-15-44

Sgt. Snider said that the infantry and air corps were working as a close-knit team in the Italian campaign.

"We were helped a lot by the Ninety-ninth Fighter Squadron," he added. "Those colored fighters were the wildest fellows I've ever seen. It didn't make any difference what you wanted—If you asked them, they'd deliver."

Once Sgt. Snider reported, his outfit was held up during an advance by three enemy tanks, and called for help from the Negro fliers.

"We were pinned down and couldn't even raise our heels," he said. "Then the planes came along. They swooped down to 300 feet, right through lots of heavy flak, and knocked those three tanks out."
4-15-44

Sgt. Snider will be reassigned at the conclusion of his furlough period.

99th Continues

Informer — Boston, Mass.
4-15-44

Support Work

Afro-Informer War Correspondent with U. S. Troops in Italy. (Copyright. Reproduction in whole or in part expressly forbidden).

ADVANCED AIR BASE —(By Cable, Censored) — Four promotions and reassignment to the group with which it previously worked in North Africa marked the week's activity as the 99th Fighter Squadron continued close support work with concentrated air attacks in the Rome area.

Major George S. Roberts, commanding officer, announced the promotion to captains of First Lieutenants Herbert E. Carter, engineering officer, of Amory, Miss., and Irwin B. Lawrence, assistant operations officer, of Cleveland; and from first lieutenants, Lewis C. Smith of Los Angeles, and Clarence W. Allen of Mobile, Ala.

Captain Carter, with sixty-six sorties to his credit, is now serving exclusively as engineering officer, whereas formerly he worked in the dual capacity of engineering officer and pilot. Captain Lawrence's promotion came the same day he returned to the squadron after twenty-seven day hospitalization. Lts. Smith and Allen both played prominent parts in the squadron's recent Anzio beachhead destruction of Nazi planes.
4-15-44

Three Coming Home

Three pilots with a combined sortie total of 248 —Capts. Charles B. Hall of Brazil, Ind.; James T. Wiley of Pittsburgh, and First Lt. Willie, E. Fuller of Tarboro, N. C. —are awaiting reassignment to the states, having been released from combat flying.

Captain Hall, with three Nazi planes to his credit, has flown eighty-nine sorties, and he is anxious for the trip, but hopes to get reassignment to an active theatre when his visit in the states is over.

Captain Wiley has flown eighty-five sorties, and Lt. Fuller, seventy-four. Both are charter members of the 99th, like Captain Hall, and have flown a varied assortment of missions with the squadron since its overseas arrival last April 24.

Reassignment of the squadron to the group it formerly worked with in Africa necessitated moving to a new airfield.
4-15-44

Live In Old Villa

In their net setup, the officers live in an old Italian stone and brick villa that belonged to a rural doctor, while the enlisted men have a tented camp in closer proximity to the airbase.

Like all native villas, this one lacks heating facilities and proper lighting, but its garden may add a bit of relaxation for the pilots in hot weather. Spring has forced the pilots to use dust respirators to offset dust-laden roads.

...here com-hospital in Sicily, and later was convalescence sent to Air Corps Hospital at Cowon for him ral Gables, Fla. 4-29-44
...to be award- "While I was a patient there left Atlantic I got the best treatment possible ...ed a colored flier, has left ... — not only in the hospital — but City for reclassification. at the officers' club too," Malone said.

Truck Hit Landmine

...red last Sep- by Lt. Thomas N. Malone, Jr., of ... in which he ...erman land- ... temporarily

Little Prejudice Among Afro American Fliers, Says 99th Pilot

4-24-44

WASHINGTON (ANP) — That racial attitudes among fliers are more harmonious than among other members of the armed service was the view expressed recently by Lt. Thomas N. Malone, Jr., of Detroit, formerly with the 99th Pursuit Squadron. He accounted for his opinion by saying that one pilot never paralyzed.

47a-1944

First Navigators Plan Cross-Country Journey

Daily World-

Atlanta, Ga.

2-13-44

Will Guide Huge Bombers From Texas Field To New York City

HONDO ARMY AIR FIELD, Hondo, Texas— (SNS)— The Nation's first class of Negro navigation cadets, scheduled to be graduated on February 26, 1944, with commissions in the Army Air Forces will navigate eight C-60 Lockheed Lodestar planes from Hondo Army Air Field to New York City the week of February 14, the War Department reported today.

Constituting the final combat training phase of the cadets as AAF students, the flight will include landings at Chicago, Illinois and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The tentative itinerary calls for rendezvous at Chicago Monday, Feb 14, at Pittsburgh on February 15, and at New York City Feb 16, with one night layover in each city. The return trip to Hondo Army Air Field will be made on February 17. 2-13-44

TO BE PAPERS' GUESTS

Colonel George B. Dany, Air Corps, commanding officer of Hondo Army Air Field, where the navigation cadets have already completed 16 weeks of an 18- week strenous training program, announced that the unit of cadets known as Squadron 10, will be guests at colorful receptions given by two Negrotion school, these cadets had many newspapers the Pittsburgh Courier and the New York Amsterdam News and the New York City Defense Recreation Committee, Inc.

It is estimated that about 24 navigation cadets will participate in the flight. Other personnel will consist of 18 pilots under the command of Major G. B. Price, Air Corps, veteran pilot and commander of Group III at Hondo Field; 13 navigation officers (instructors), headed by First Lieutenant George F. McInerey, Air Corps, who has guided Squadron 10 as flight commander during its tour of training, and eight enlisted crew chiefs. 2-13-44

Lieutenant Colonel Cecil H. Childre, Air Corps, director of training at the huge Texas airbase, will pilot one of the training ships on the combat flight and will serve as commander of troops. Details of planning and directing the flight will be the responsibility of Major Price until destinations have been reached.

ARRINGTON MARCHER

Although the combat flight will permit participation by flight personnel in prepared celebrations the training element involved must be the first consideration, Colonel Dany emphasized. He further pointed out that the fulfillment of all flight plans are dependent on prevailing conditions along the routes to be flown.

Aviation Student Walter A. Arrington, of Washington, D. C., has served as group marcher for the unit. He is a graduate of Michigan State College (B. S. 1941) where he was an outstanding athlete. He also was a member of the All-American Track Team and recipient of the Illinois Relays All-Around Track Award in 1940.

Seven of the navigation cadets are from the state of New York. Other states represented by the group include Michigan, California, West Virginia, Iowa, Illinois, Idaho, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Wyoming and North Carolina. 2-14-44

FROM MANY FIELDS

Before entering the AAF navigavocations, among them being the following: optional instrument assembler, photograher, aircraft riveter, radio engineer, assistant medical technician, bacteriologist and junior statistician.

While training at Hondo Field the class has "logged" 15,000 miles on training flights. Their training ships were C-60 Lockheed Lodestars and the AT-7 Navigator.

During the course the cadets gained proficiency in four phases of aerial combat navigation: dead reckoning (instrument flying); pilotage (familiar landmarks); radio (beam flying and celestial (plotting a course by reference to celestial bodies).

Following graduation the Negro navigators will receive advanced training as Bombardiers.

Mayor Welcomes Negro Air Cadets

Daily Worker—

New York, N.Y.

2-17-44

By Harry Raymond

Mayor LaGuardia extended the official welcome of the city to 24 young Army fliers—members of the Air Corps' first class of Negro aviation navigation cadets—when they arrived here yesterday in a test flight from Hondo Army Air Field, Texas.

They flew into LaGuardia Airport in eight C-60 Lockheed Lodestar planes, accompanied by 40 officers, navigating the ships themselves as part of the final phase of their training course.

Following a luncheon at the airport the group motor-paraded to City Hall where Justice Francis E. Rivers, first Negro judge elected to the city court, presented the fliers to the Mayor.

The Mayor, a World War 1 pilot, spent most of the time during the reception talking shop with Negro cadets and officers. 2-17-44

"I am very happy to welcome you to our little town," he said. "You must be very proud of having completed your preliminary course and being in the best branch of the best army in the world."

SECOND LIEUTENANTS

The cadets, the Mayor was advised, will be commissioned as second lieutenants on Feb. 26. They will then take eighteen more weeks of advanced training and are expected to be assigned to 477th Bombardment Group (medium), an all-Negro bombing outfit.

The cadets and Army officers applauded the Mayor when, turned to them, he said:

"It isn't what's on the outside of a man's skin that makes him an American. And it's what's under your belt that makes you a good flier."

LaGuardia concluded his informal talk to the cadets lauding the accomplishments at the front of the 99th Aero Squadron, a Negro fighter group commanded by Lieut. Col. Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., a West Point graduate and son of the famed Negro General Benjamin O. Davis. 2-17-44

"The 99th Squadron has broken down the old tradition that a Negro couldn't fly,' declared the Mayor.

The Negro cadets with their officers were escorted from City Hall by a detail of motorcycle police to the Savoy Ballroom, Lenox Avenue and 140th St., where a reception was held for them by the Harlem Defense Recreation Committee. Eight of them are New Yorkers.

The official reception committee for the city, which met the cadets when they landed at LaGuardia Airport, included, besides Judge Rivers, Manhattan Borough President Edgar J. Nathan, Jr.; Mary L. Gibbons, First Deputy Commissioner of the Department of Welfare; Judge Hubert T. Delaney of Domestic Relations Court; Parole Commissioner Samuel Battle, and Dr. Channing H. Tobias, of the International Committee of the Young Men's Christian Association.

Take C-60 Lockheeds 1,000 Miles

Argus-St. Louis, Mo.

2-18-44

HONDO ARMY AIR FIELD, HONDO, Texas—The Nation's first class of Negro navigation cadets, scheduled to be graduated on February 26, 1944, with commissions in the Army Air Forces, will navigate eight C-60 Lockheed Lodestar planes from Hondo Army Air Field to New York City the week of February 14, the War Department reported today.

Constituting the final combat training phase of the cadets as AAF students, the flight will include landing at Chicago, Ill. and Pittsburgh, Pa. The tentative itinerary calls for rendezvous at Chicago on Monday, February 14, at Pittsburgh on February 15, and at New York City on February 16, with one night layover in each city. The return trip to Hondo Army Air Field will be made on February 17.

Colonel George B. Dany, Air Corps, commanding officer of Hondo Army Air Field, where the navigation cadets have already completed 16 weeks of an 18-week strenuous training program, announced that the unit of cadets, known as Squadron 10, will be guests at colorful receptions given by the Pittsburgh Courier and the New York Amsterdam News, and the New York City Defense Recreation Committee, Inc.

24 Participate

It is estimated that about 24 navigation cadets will participate in the flight. Other personnel will consist of 18 pilots under the command of Major G. B. Price, Air Corps, veteran pilot and commander of Group 111 at Hondo Field; 13 navigation officers (instructors), headed by First Lieutenant George F. McInerney, Air Corps, who has guided Squadron 10 as flight commander during its tour of training, and eight enlisted crew chiefs.

Lieutenant Colonel Cecil H. Childre, Air Corps, director of training at the huge Texas airbase, will pilot one of the training ships on the cambat flight and will serve as commander of troops. Details of planning and directing the flight will be the responsibility of Major Price until destinations have been reached. 2-18-44

Aviation Student Walter A. Arrington, of Washington, D. C., has served as group marcher for the unit. He is a graduate of Michigan State College (B.S., 1941), where he was an outstanding athlete. He also was a member of the All-American Track Team and recipient of the Illinois Relays All-Around Track Award in 1940.

Logged 15000 Miles

Seven of the navigation cadets are from the state of New York. Other states represented by the group include Michigan, California, West Virginia, Iowa, Illinois, Idaho, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Wyoming and North Carolina.

Before entering the AAF navigation school, these cadets had many vocations, among them being the following: optical instrument assembler, photographer, aircraft riveter, radio engineer, assistant medical technician, bacteriologist and junior statistician.

While training at Hondo Field, the class has "logged" 15,000 miles on training flights. Their training ships were C-60 Lockheed Lodestars and the AT-7 Navigator.

From Texas To New York

Pioneer Class Of Navigation Cadets Guests Of Courier

—Sketched from an oil painting by John P. Cowan, this striking picture of a bombardier-navigator . . . one of a group of 24 cadets who are charting a course from Hondo Field, Texas, to New York, as the final phase of their training.

[Other Photos - Page 10]

2-19-44

Weather permitting, 62 daring airmen from Hondo Field, Texas, were scheduled to invade Pittsburgh Tuesday as guests of The Pittsburgh Courier to participate in a mammoth War Bond rally at Soldiers and Sailor's Memorial hall.

The group, consisting of 24 colored navigation cadets being trained for navigators, is on a 5,000-mile pre-combat flight, simulating actual war conditions. Its trip to Pittsburgh, following a stop in Chicago, is under the auspices of the U. S. War Department. The next stop on the itinerary is to be New York City, Wednesday, and late Thursday the fliers are due back at Hondo Field.

TRUMAN GIBSON WITH FLIERS

The fliers are in the custody of Assistant Secretary of War John J. McCloy, who was accompanied by Truman K. Gibson, Jr., civilian aide to Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson.

The battle to open up the U. S. Air Force to Negroes was begun in June, 1940, when The Courier prevailed upon the U. S. Senate to amend the Air Corps Expansion bill so as to provide for training Negro aviators. This provision in the law was responsible for the establishment of the Tuskegee Army Flying school, Tuskegee, Ala., where colored fighter pilots were trained for the first time in history, and where the famous 99th Pursuit Squadron was developed.

COURIER KEPT UP FIGHT

Continuous insistence by The Courier resulted in further provisions for the training of Negroes to operate bombing planes. Squadron No. 10, which will go into action when bombers piloted by Negroes see action, and carry the war to the enemy in Europe and the Pacific, is one of these groups effected by The Courier fight. The other, which has gone through advanced training to date, is the newly activated 477th Bombardment Group, recently transferred to Selfridge Field, Mich., from California.

Squadron No. 10 colored navigators making the pre-combat training flight and War Bond tour are: Cadets Arnold W. Galimore, New York City; Celestino S. Monclova, Brooklyn, N. Y.; LeRoy F. Gillead, New York City; George W. Prioleau, Los Angeles; Alfonso C. Toler, Mahan, W. Va.; Wendell R. Smith, Des Moines, Iowa; Geo. McDonald, Jr., Los Angeles; Edward Pressly, Chicago; George W. Giddings, Yonkers, N. Y.; Wardell A. Polk, Detroit; Kirmit G. Bailer, Detroit; Arthur Robinson, Detroit; Everett E. Richardson, Philadelphia; Richard B. Carter, Asbury Park, N. J.; Francis B. Collier, Berkeley, Calif.; Eugene L. Runyon, Richmond, Ky.; William A. Harrison, New York City; Harold E. Ward, Philadelphia; Reginald A. Freeman, Jamaica, L. I., N. Y.; Joe Witten Connolly, Bluefield, W. Va.; William M. Heyward, Boston; Walter A. Arrington, Washington, D. C.; Thomas W. Haywood, Jr., Warrenton, N. C., and Fenton B. Sands, New York City.

Order Restricts Women Speaking To Race Soldiers

Courier, Pittsburgh, Pa.

LONDON — The House of Commons heard a demand made Wednesday for the removal of a British War Office order forbidding members of the Auxiliary Territorial Service to speak to Negro American soldiers, except in the presence of white persons. The demand was made by William Leach, laborite. The ATS is equivalent to the American WAC. 2-19-44

Declaring that no such restriction governs the ATS and white American soldiers, Leach, in a question to Sir James Grigg, war secretary, asked who was responsible for the order.

47a-1944

Paratroopers

Georgian Is First Paratrooper As First Race Paratroops Got Wings

Daily World-Atlanta, Ga. 1-16-44

FORT BENNING, Ga.—(SNS)—Selected as the first enlisted member of the 555th Parachute Company, the first Negro parachute organization to be formed, is First Sergeant Walter Morris, of Waynesboro, Georgia. The 555th Parachute Company was activated at Fort Benning, Georgia, December 30, 1943, with Captain William V. Johnson in command. Volunteers for parachute training are expected to arrive shortly to bring the Company up to normal strength. Sgt. Morris is well qualified to discharge the duties of First Sergeant, as he has served in that capacity for over six months as First Sergeant of Service Company, First Parachute Training Regiment. He entered the Army on 4th of April, 1941, and was assigned to the Parachute School on the 9th of February, 1942. He said that he was looking forward to taking parachute training.—(U. S. Army Signal Corps Photo).

Daily World. Atlanta, Ga. 3-11-44

PARACHUTE WINGS are pinned on the first Negro paratroopers to graduate from the Parachute School, Fort Benning, Georgia, by Captain William V. Johnson. These airborne troops, first in the United States Army, are members of the 555th Parachute Infantry Company. Sergeant Roger S. Walden, of Detroit, Michigan, is the paratrooper receiving his wings from Captain Johnson. (Photo by U. S. Signal Corps.)

Paratroopers Get Silver Wings

Daily World Atlanta, Ga. 2-18-44

FORT BENNING, Ga.—(SNS)—Sixteen Negro soldiers, the first of their race to make the grade as paratroopers, placed on their silver wings of the Army's airborne infantry Thursday and were assigned to help train an All-Negro parachute unit.

The 16 made their fifth and qualifying jump at night from a transport plane after four weeks of training at the parachute school here. Officers stated that as soon as the first Negro unit was brought to full strength it would engage in combat training.

NEGRO PARATROOP SCHOOL SELECTED

Ga. Herald-Birmingham

WASHINGTON, Dec. 31—(AP)—Ft. Benning, Ga., has been selected for training the first Negro parachute unit in the Army, the War Department announced Thursday.

The new unit, to be known as the 555th Parachute Infantry Company, will be under Brig. Gen. Leo Donovan, commanding general of the Airborne Command. Gen. Donovan will select volunteers from the 92nd Infantry Division at Ft. Huachuca, Ariz., for the Negro unit.

Negro paratroopers will receive $50 monthly additional pay after the first month's training at the Benning Parachute School.

The department said other new parachute units are being formed and applications for that branch are still being accepted. It pointed to successful use of the units in operations in North Africa, Sicily, Italy and the Southwest Pacific.

Maneuverability of paratroops has been perfected to the point where an entire airborne division recently was landed in a single night and day operation near Camp Mackall, North Carolina.

First Paratroop Officers Qualify

Daily World-Atlanta, Ga. 3-16-44

FORT BENNING, Ga.—(ANP)—The first officers for the all-Negro 555th Parachute infantry have qualified as jumpers at the parachute school and have joined their cadre of enlisted men for further training of the volunteer chutists. On winning their wings, the officers received their coveted "wings" at a review before Brig Gen. Ridgely Gaither, commandant of the parachute school.

Sixteen enlisted men, the first colored paratroopers, qualified a few weeks ago and now are engaged in processing more volunteers for their organization who are reporting to Benning for training.

First Lt. Jasper E. Ross, 2nd Lts., Bradley Biggs, Clifford Allen, Edward D. Baker, Warren C. Cornelius and Edwin H. Wills bear the distinction of being the first among those selected to lead the now all colored 555th to complete successfully the rigorous training of the parachute school. 3-16-44

PARACHUTE COMPANY IS NOW OPEN TO VOLUNTEERS

WASHINGTON, D. C. — The 555th Parachute Infantry Company, first Negro parachute unit in the United States Army, is now open to volunteers from installations of the Army Ground Forces, the War Department announced today.

Organized last December, the Infantry Company may apply for unit is stationed at Fort Benning, such duty through regular channels for the Georgia. Initial volunteers for the enlisted cadre were selected from through the orderly rooms of the 92nd Infantry Division at Fort Huachuca, Arizona, and the Third Army. 3-16-44

Qualified enlisted men who wish to serve with the 555th Parachute

Army Training Colored Paratroopers

Philadelphia Tribune - Phila., Pa. 3-18-44

THE stern necessities of the present war have led to the use of colored men in the United States Army in many capacities in which hitherto it had been impossible to secure acceptance.

Most recent is the announcement of the Army to activate colored paratroop units at Fort Benning, Ga. We have noted, with pardonable pride, that the first unit has taken the necessary training and has been graduated.

We hope that this is but the first of a large number of similar units which, in the days to come, will take the training as paratroopers and be ready for this highly skilled participation in actual combat. 3-18-44

It must never be said that our young men lacked courage and were unwilling to risk their all for their native land.

First Negro Paratroopers Win Instructors' Praise

Courier - Pittsburgh, Pa.

2-5-44

FORT BENNING, Ga.—Next week the U.S. Army's first Negro Paratroopers will embark upon their third week of training in the course in the Parachute school here to qualify as 'chutists in the Airborne Command. Twenty soldiers form the cadre of the 555th Parachute infantry and are engaged in training here as the nucleus of the all-colored parachute unit.

LAUD PARATROOPERS

Instructors at the Parachute school have complimented the troops on their attitude, hard work and willingness to learn.

Among those who are enrolled in parachute training now are:

S/Sgt. Lonnie Duke, Houston, Texas.
Sgt. Alvin Moon, Washington, D.C.
Sgt. Daniel Weil, Chicago, Ill.
S/Sgt. Calvin R. Beal, Oxford, Ohio.
Sgt. James E. Korngay, Philadelphia, Pa.
Sgt. Emerald Jones, St. Louis, Mo.
S/Sgt. Hubert Bridges, Albany, Ga.
Sgt. Leo D. Reed, Chicago, Ill.
Cpl. McKinley Godfrey, Pelly, Texas.
S/Sgt. Robert F. Greene, Bridgehampton, Long Isalnd, N. Y. 2-5-44
T/4 Clarence H. Beavers, New York, N. Y.
Sgt. Ned D. Bess, Indianapolis, Ind.
Sgt. Jack D. Tillis, St. Louis, Mo.
1st Sgt. Walter Morris, Waynesboro, Ga.
Pvt. James H. Williams, Natchez, Miss.
Cpl. Elijah H. Wesby, Philadelphia, Pa.
Sgt. Robert S. Walden, Detroit, Mich.
T/5 Cleo A. Washington, Montgomery, Alabama.
Cpl. Carstell O. Stewart, Albany, N. Y.
Sgt. Samuel W. Robinson, Chicago.

First Negro Paratroopers Win Coveted Silver Wings

Daily World - Atlanta, Ga. 2-24-44

COLUMBUS, Ga.—(SNS)—America's First Negro paratroopers, after completing rigid examinations, last week were awarded the coveted silver wings given "glam-our boys" of the Army. In first photo at left a group of the boys are shown riding high over Fort Benning in a C-47 Transport plane, preparatory to making one of the five required qualifying jumps. Seated l to r are Staff Sergeant Calvin R. Beal, Oxford, Ohio; Sgt. Ned D. Bess, Indianapolis; Sgt. William W. Robinson, Chicago and McKinley Godfrey, Pelly, Texas. In center photo one of the group of 16 who have qualified is shown as he came in for a landing during his jump training. At right Captain William V. Johnson, is seen presenting a certificate to First Sergeant W. Morris of Waynesboro, Georgia, indicating that he has qualified to receive the wings worn by paratroopers. Fifteen other Negro paratroopers, representing the advanced cadres of the 515th Infantry Paratroop Battalion, also received their certificates and wings. In the background right of Sgt. Morris is seen Technician, fifth grade, E. Wesby. (Official Photos by U. S. Army Air Forces.)

2-24-44

White Paratroops Didn't Know Of Colored Brothers

Daily World Atlanta, Ga. 4-12-44

When members of the 555th Airbase Infantry, the Paratroopers, invaded Atlanta Easter week-end as guests of the Servicemen's Center on West Hunter street, the local Military Police officers could hardly believe their own eyes.

Accosted by two white Paratroopers on Broad street, who seemingly didn't subscribe to the old adage, "seeing is believing," Pvt. B. F. Lane, Jr. wondeerd if he wouldn't have to resort to some of the rough tactics he had been taught to use on the Nazis and Japs in his effort to convince his brohters-in-arms that he too is really and truly a Paratrooper, no diferent from those of another race, except that his skin contained a bit more pigmentation.

"There aint no n . . . . r Paratroopers in the Army," the two belligerent whites insisted, and Pvt. Lane, insult added to injury, summarily decided to change their minds and physical appearances concurrently, when two MP's rushed up to settle the argument.

Being part of a group, Paratrooper Lane had no individual papers to account for his presence in Atlanta, or to prove his status as a Paratrooper, and only after the officers of the 555th Infantry were contacted at the Center on Hunter Street to verify Lane's status did the doubting MP's believe their eyes. 4-12-44

But the Negro private was willing to show his prowess as a paratrooper through physical means.

Paratroop

Tribune - Philadel., Pa. 1-8-44

WASHINGTON, D. C.—Plans were completed December 31 for the formation of the first Negro Army Parachute Group, according to the War Department.

Brig. Gen. Leo Donovan, commanding general of the airborne command, under whom the unit, designated as the 55th Parachute Infantry Company, will serve, has been authorized to appoint a field officer and a medical officer to select volunteers for an enlisted cadre from the 92nd Infantry Division at Fort Huachuca, Ariz.

Volunteers, who are accepted for the first colored paratroopers unit, will receive the same rigorous training as the white volunteers. 1-8-44

After the first month, qualified men will be assigned to paratroop units and will get an extra $50 a month pay.

The War Department, which has not heretofore accepted Negroes in paratroop formations, emphasizes that it is anxious to get all the men, white and colored, it can for this type of dangerous duty. To qualify, soldiers must be between the ages of 18 and 32 inclusive, must not be over six feet in height and must not weigh more than 185 pounds.

Third Class Of Negro Paratroopers Jumps This Week At Benning

Age - New York, N. Y. 6-3-44

FORT BENING, Georgia—Fifty enlisted men, the third class of Negro paratroopers to reach the advance stage of training at the Parachute School, Fort Benning, Georgia, are scheduled to make their five qualifying jumps from planes this week. Ten Negro commissioned officers are presently serving with the 555th Infantry Company, which was activated at Fort Benning in January. May are presently accepted for Additional personnel already entered the company have the primary phases of parachute training.

The second class of Negro paratroopers, numbering 70 privates, graduated Monday.

6-3-44

47a-1944

Manpower Shortage Compels Army To Recruit Colored Parachute Unit

Tribune-Philadelphia, Pa

ONCE again the desperate manpower shortage has forced the war managers to draw upon the neglected reservoir of Negro fighting men.

Heretofore the War Department has stubbornly refused to accept the Negro in paratroop formation. Now it makes the announcement that 1-8-44

"IT HAS COMPLETED PLANS FOR THE FIRST NEGRO PARACHUTE UNIT."

The American Army is preparing to bear the brunt of European invasion, in which it will need to employ every available element of fighting strength. So far, Russia and Britain have failed to stop Hitler and force a surrender. America, with the aid of its mighty Allies, is now expected to deliver the knock-out blow.

Today, the American Army numbers seven million seven hundred thousand (7,700,000) officers and men, which is twice as big as the American military machine in the First World War. Already four million of these warriors have been rushed across the oceans and occupy overseas bases; and eight hundred thousand (800,000) of this number are Negro troops.

If this new fighting machine, added to our powerful Allies, shows superior striking power the end of Herr Hitler will come quickly. Otherwise the fight will drag on to an uncertain outcome. 1-8-44

Perhaps the most glaring example of Army stupidity is its delaying inclusion of Negro paratroop units until the very threshold of the invasion season.

Ye Gods, be merciful to our narrow-minded war managers, as they undertake this Great Overseas Adventure!

Paratroopers At Tskegee

Having recently completed the paratroopers course at Fort Benning, Ga., are three instructors of the 555th Parachute Co. Shown on the ramp of the flight line at the Tuskegee Army Air Field are, from left to right: Sgts. James Kornegay and Jack D. Tillis of New York City; Sgt. Ned D. Bess and 1st Lt. Frank M. Brown, TAAF, student pilot of Indianapolis, Indiana. The Parachutists were greatly impressed with the pilot training program at

Paratroopers

TAAF, but felt that their duties as the "aerial army" are equally as exciting. (Official U. S. AAF Photo by AAF Training Command.)

War Dept. Announces First Negro Parachute Unit, 555th Parachute Infantry, To Be At Ft. Benning

Age-New York, N.Y.

1-8-44

WASHINGTON, D. C.—Plans for the first Negro parachute unit in the American Army have been completed ,and the unit, designated as the 555th Parachute Infantry Company, will be activated at Fort Benning, Georgia, the War Department announced Thursday.

Brigadier General Leo Donovan, Commanding General of the Airborne Command, under whom the unit will serve, has been authorized to appoint a field officer and a medical officer to select volunteers for an enlisted cadre from the 92nd Infantry Division at Fort Huachuca, Arizona.

Other personnel necessary for the cadre will be furnished by the Third Army, and the balance of the company's strength will be provided later from qualified volunteers.

In taking its place under the Airborne Command, the 555th Parachute Infantry Company is joining an element of the Army that is comparatively new, but has already made a spectacular contribution to the war effort, both in this country and overseas. 1-8-44

Parachute units have been successfully used in combat in North Africa, Sicilly, Italy, and the Southwest Pacific. Recently, in an important demonstration of this nation's striking power from the sky, an entire airborne division was landed in a single night-and-day operation during maneuvers near Camp MacKall, North Carolina.

Volunteers accepted for the new unit will receive the rigorous training at the Parachute School, Fort Benning, which every soldier must undergo in order to become qualified for duty with parachute troops.

First, there will be a month for each man to learn the rudiments, building up through special conditioning and controlled jumps from towers to their first jumps from planes. They also will be taught the details of proper care and maintenance of their parachutes, handling of their equipment and weapons, and every other phase of their new activity.

After the first month, qualified parachutists will be assigned to their unit, and will receive the $50 additional pay each month to which every parachute soldier is entitled.

With other new parachute units in process of formation, the War Department emphasizes that applicants for this type of duty are still being accepted. To qualify, soldiers must be between the ages of 18 to 32, inclusive, must not be over 72 inches in height, and must not weigh over 185 pounds. 1-8-44

Certain other physical qaulifications, which are determined by Army medical officers in the course of a physical examination, also are necessary. Enlisted men must apply for parachute duty through regular channels, instituting their requests through company orderly rooms.

Third Paratrooper Class Is Graduated

Daily World-Atlanta, Ga.

5-31-44

FORT BENNING, Ga.—(SNS)—Fifty enlisted men, the third class of Negro paratroopers to reach the advance stage of training at the Parachute School, Fort Benning, Georgia, are scheduled to make their five qualifying jumps from planes this week, the War Department announced today.

The second class of Negro paratroopers, numbering 70 privates, were presented with silver parachutist's wings on Saturday, May 20, 1944. This group brought to 87 the total number of enlisted men assigned to the 555th Parachute Infantry Company, which was activated at Fort Benning in January, 1944. 5-31-44

Ten Negro commissioned officers are presently serving with the 555th. Additional personnel accepted for the company have already entered the primary phases of parachute school training.

troopers make four daytime jumps from C-47 transport planes and one night jump.

Two New Yorkers are among the history-making class of 16. They are T/4 Clarence H. Beavers, 701 St. Nicholas av, and Staff Sgt. Robert F. Greene, Bridgehampton, Long Island.

Paratroopers Get Wings At Benning

Peoples Voice New York, N.Y.

2-26-44

FORT BENNING, Ga.—The first class of Negro paratroopers graduated last Wednesday from Parachute School at Fort Benning, Ga. and the 16 men of the group add their names to a growing list of "first" achievements made by Negro soldiers in this war. Only last week the first class of ... dark night on enemy territory.

Four weeks of arduous training ... culminated in a final jump through ... inky space last Tuesday night ... which guides descent to ground. ... enter the course. Whenever the ... The course is broken down into ... On other three towers, called ... to con- "free towers," chutists were ... their feet the famed and high- ... adjust dropped free from the top of the ... them tower, and glided to a landing as ... ard of each controlled his own chute's ... descent.

The new paratroopers now wear ... first Negro parachute unit is four stages, each designed to ... over wings on their breasts and brought to full strength, the ... dition soldiers physically, adjus... prized ten-inch jump boots— overseas and drop out of the skies in attaining the high standard o...

Negro Parachute Company Now Open to Volunteers

Baltimore, Dos Moines Tribune March 16, 1944

Washington, D. C.—The 555th Parachute Infantry Company, first Negro parachute unit in the United States Army, is now open to volunteers from installations of the Army Ground Forces, the War Department announced today.

Organized last December, the unit is stationed at Fort Benning, Georgia. Initial volunteers for the enlisted cadre were selected from the 92nd Infantry Division at Fort Huachuca, Arizona, and the Third Army.

Qualified enlisted men who wish to serve with the 555th Parachute Infantry Company may apply for such duty through regular channels, initiating their requests through the orderly rooms of their present organizations.

To qualify as a parachutist a soldier must be between the ages of 18 to 32 inclusive, must not be over 72 inches in height, and must not weigh over 185 pounds. Other physical qualifications determined by Army medical officers during the course of a thorough physical examination also are necessary. March 16, 1944

Once accepted, volunteers for the 555th Parachute Infantry Company will be given training at the Parachute School, Fort Benning. This starts out with a physical conditioning program, preparation for jumping by using controlled jumps from towers and finally builds up to the first jumps from planes. Handling of the parachute, care of equipment and weapons and other phases of duty are taught by expert instructors.

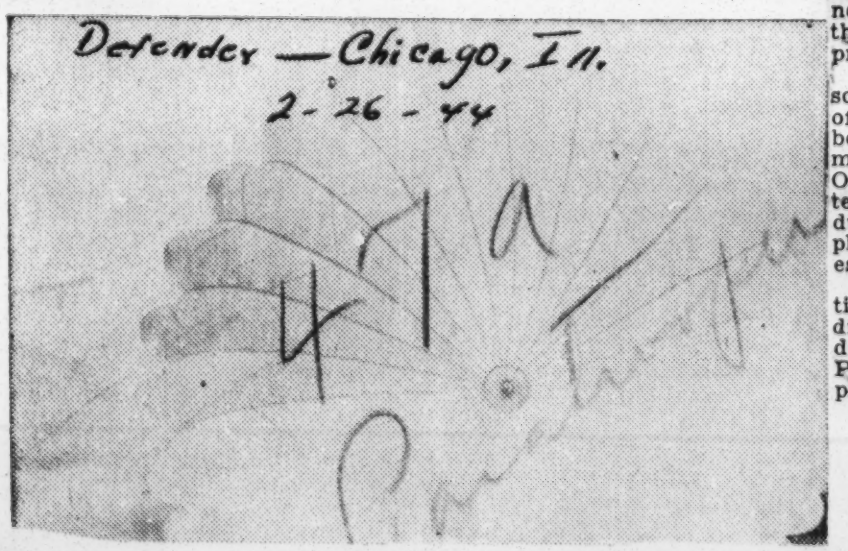
Parachutists receive $50 additional pay each month This additional pay begins when the soldier starts his training at the Parachute school to qualify as a parachutist.

FIRST PARATROOPS PASS TEST

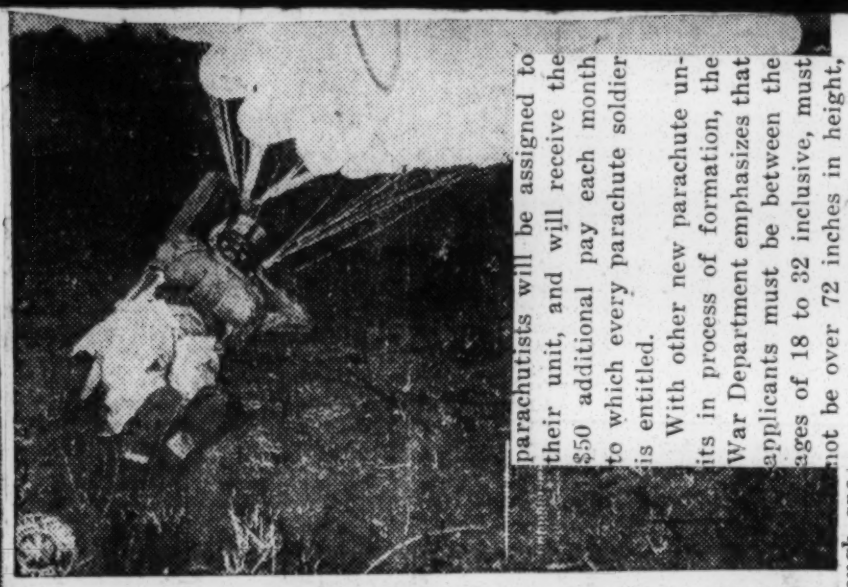
Defender—Chicago, Ill. 2-26-44

Riding high over Fort Benning, in a C-47 transport plane, are these aspiring Negro paratroopers, preparatory to making one of the required five qualifying jumps. Seated (right to left) Staff Sgt. Calvin R. Beal of Oxford, Ohio; Sgt. Clarence H. Beavers of New York City, N. Y.; Sgt. Ned D. Bess of Indianapolis, Ind.; Sgt. William W. Robinson of Chicago, Ill., and Cpl. McKinley Godfrey of Pelly, Texas.

2-26-44



Defender—Chicago, Ill.
2-26-44



Gathering his chute after landing at Fort Benning is Staff Sgt. Lonnie Duke of Houston, Texas.

PARATROOP OFFICERS GET 'WINGS'

Courier—Pittsburgh, Pa
3-18-44

FORT BENNING, Ga.—First officers for the colored 555th Parachute Infantry have qualified as jumpers in the parachute school and are now processing volunteers reporting here for similar training. Sixteen enlisted men, the first Negro paratroopers, "made the grade" a few weeks ago.

After the paratroopers had received their wings in the presence of Brig. Gen. Ridgely Gaither, commanding officer of the parachute school, six members of the group was selected to lead the infantry. They are 1st Lt. Jasper E. Ross, Chicago; 2nd Lts. Bradley Biggs, Newark, N. J.; Clifford Allen, Chicago; Edward E. Baker, East Chicago, Ind.; Warren C. Cornelius, Atlantic City, N. J., and Edwin H. Wills, Washington, D. C.

HOW TO BECOME PARATROOPER 3-18-44

Qualified enlisted men who wish to serve with the 555th Parachute Infantry company may apply for such duty through regular channels, initiating their requests through the orderly rooms of their present organizations. 3-18-44

To qualify as a parachutist a soldier must be between the ages of 18 and 32 inclusive, must not be over 72 inches in height, and must not weigh over 185 pounds. Other physical qualifications determined by Army medical officers during the course of a thorough physical examination are also necessary.

Parachutists receive $50 additional pay each month. This additional pay begins when the soldier starts his training at the Parachute school to qualify as a parachutist.

First Negro Parachute Unit to Be Activated at Fort Benning

Tribune—Washington, D. C.
1-1-44

Plans for the first Negro parachute unit in the American Airborne Command, under whom the unit will serve, has been authorized to appoint a field officer and a medical officer to select volunteers for an enlisted cadre from the 92nd Infantry Division at Fort Huachuca, Other personnel necessary for the cadre will be furnished by the Third Army, and the balance of the company's strength will be provided later from qualified volunteers.

In taking its place under the Airborne Command, the 555th Parachute Infantry Company is joining an element of the Army that is comparatively new, but has already made a spectacular contribution to the war effort, both in this country and overseas. Parachute units have been successfully used in combat in North Africa, Sicily, Italy, and the Southwest Pacific.

Other personnel necessary for an important demonstration of my have been completed, and the unit, designated as the 555th Parachute Infantry Company, will be activated at Fort Benning, Ga., the War Department announced.

Brigadier General Leo Donovan, Commanding General of the

1-1-44

parachutists will be assigned to their unit, and will receive the $50 additional pay each month to which every parachute soldier is entitled.

With other new parachute units in process of formation, the War Department emphasizes that applicants must be between the ages of 18 to 32 inclusive, must not be over 72 inches in height, and must not weigh over 185 pounds.

1-1-44

cial conditioning and controlled for the jumps from towers to their first Certain other physical qualifications, which are determined at the Parachute will be taught the details of prop- by Army medical officers in the ening, which ev- er care and maintenance of their course of a physical examination, st undergo in or- parachutes, handling of their also are necessary. Enlisted qualified for duty equipment and weapons, and ev- men must apply for parachute troops. ery other phase of their new ac- duty through regular channels, will be a month tivity. institutting their requests through to learn the rudi- After the first month, qualified company orderly rooms.

47a-1944

332nd

332nd Fighter Group In Italy Faces 'Collapse,' But Morale Is Still High

Chicago Defender 12-23-44

ROME—Nineteen months of combat, patrol and reconnaissance flights have taken their toll of Negro pilots, and Col. Benjamin O. Davis' 332nd fighter group "is threatened with possible collapse as a unit."

"Casualties have depleted their ranks," reported PM's Negro correspondent Roi Ottley last week, "And adequate replacements have failed to arrive. The bottom here has been scraped."

"The reason offered by members of the group is that there are inefficient pilots to fly missions," Ottley wrote. "Yet the Negro fighter group has demonstrated a toughness, skill and intelligence which may assure Negroes a places in postwar aviation." 12-23-44

Gen. Montgomery Praised Pilots

"As raw pilots they won commendation from Gen. Montgomery for their part in the Italian campaign. They supported the British 8th Army by dive bombing and strafing enemy machine-gun nests, tanks, transportation and artillery installations." 12-23-44

In their 19 months of combat duty overseas, Negro flyers have seen action over Munich, Vienna, Toulon, Ploesti, Sofia, Belgrade, Friedrichshafen, Budapest and Salerno. The four fighter squadrons have provided cover for heavy bombers, patrolled harbors, convoyed ships, hunted U-boats and made reconnaissance flights. Over the Anzio beachhead they shot down 17 enemy fighters and bombers in one day's operation.

"But the fact is that this is a glorified Jim Crow organization," Ottley continued, "and it is for this very reason, the pilots claim, that the personnel situation is critical. While, as an all-Negro organization, it admittedly provided new opportunities, they say, it also has serious drawbacks. These they describe as follows:

Lack Pilots For Replacements

"The inexperience of Negro officers, pilots and mechanics who do not have the opportunity to associate with veterans before going into action.

"Lack of a steady flow of replacements caused by the pattern of drawing pilots from only the Negro air schools. The number of pilots being trained has been reduced. 12-23-44

"Lack of proper orientation in combat tactics before coming overseas, because their white instructors were without combat experience.

"Unfamiliarity with the type of aircraft pilots will fly in combat.

"Mental strain of competition against the entire corps of white pilots and ground crews.

"Intellectual isolation produced by having all Negroes in one organization away from every other fighter pilot group.

Differentials are applied in the judgement of performance by the air corps command.

Morale Still High

"These criticisms have not impaired the organization's morale," Ottley added. "The fact is that it is very high." But it is doubtful whether it hinges on the declared objectives of the war. More than likely it is a group loyalty, tied loosely to aspirations for their race. For each men has pride in his part in the common undertaking. He wants Negro pilots to excel. They reason that they have a job to do and cooperation is necessary for success, but they have moments when they feel the whole effort is worthless." 12-23-44

Ottley then describes the unique organizational setup of the Fighter group, which comprises "every department for keeping pilots flying, from mess and maintenance to armaments, engineering, morale and administration. Every aspect of the group's duty routines duplicates that of every U. S. fighter group. Every function is performed by Negro personnel."

"The educational level of the group is high," the reported continued. "Nearly 30 per cent of the combined air and ground personnel have attended college. Significantly of the more than 200 Negro commissioned officers three-quarters were born and reared in the North; those from below the Mason-Dixon line form the great bulk of the enlisted men."

47a-1944

Tan Flyers Rated OK

12-30-44

332nd Fighter Group Called Tough, Hard-Hitting Outfit

Amsterdam News — New York, N.Y.

ATLANTIC CITY, N. J.—In less than one year the all-Negro 332nd Fighter Group, stationed with the 15th Air Force in Italy, has flown more than 100 missions and has firmly established itself as an efficient, hard-hitting outfit, Colonel Benjamin O. Davis Jr., the Group's commanding officer, declared last week.

"Flying P-51s on bomber escort and strafing missions, we destroyed 75 ships in the air and easily twice that number on the ground", the Colonel recapitulated at AAF Redistribution Station No. 1.

Colonel Davis, who is married and makes his home at 1721 S Street, N. W., Washington, D. C., took command of the 332nd shortly before it was sent to Italy in January of this year. He pointed out that flying fighter escort on long range bombing missions was a job well suited to his group.

"All the men enjoy it," he added, "because it gives them the best opportunity for aerial combat."

As an example of the lengths to which his men will go to get into the thick of things, the 32-year-old West Pointer told of a mission to Budapest last October when the four squadrons comprising the 332nd were ordered to strafe river and rail traffic along the Danube.

West of Budapest, he related, a pilot spotted a low-flying plane and was sent down to investigate. The pilot shot the plane down, then called for the rest of his squadron.

"They were over an airfield where fliers were practising landings and takeoffs," said the Colonel. "They joined the traffic pattern and shot down four more ME-109s. On their way up to rejoin the group they picked up four Heinkel 111s and after a series of passes got them all.

The squadron headed by the Colonel then proceeded up the Danube and strafed oil barges and railway trains. A third squadron located another airfield and destroyed 18 ships on the ground, while the fourth came across a motor park and destroyed or damaged a fleet of trucks.

"Not bad for one five-hour mission," added the Colonel.

Colonel Davis, who finished West Point in 1936, was instrumental in the formation of the first all-Negro fighter squadron—the 99th. He took the 99th overseas as its commanding officer in April 1943, and it remained a separate unit for 14 months until absorbed by the 332nd Fighter Group.

"While a separate unit the 99th made a name for itself," said the Colonel. "It destroyed 17 planes in the air and many more on the ground, but those kills were really by-products, since the squadron worked mostly in support of ground troops. It did its best work early in the Anzio campaign when it got eight in one day."

Colonel Davis holds the Legion of Merit, the DFC, and the Air Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters.

Efficient, Hard-Hitting Outfit

Guide

Journal + Guide

12-30-44

Has Flown More Than 100 Missions With 15th Airforce

Norfolk, Va.

ATLANTIC CITY, N. J. — In less than one year, the all-Negro 332nd Fighter Group, stationed with the 15th Air Force in Italy, has flown more than 100 missions and has firmly established itself as an efficient, hard-hitting outfit, Colonel Benjamin O. Davis Jr., the group's commanding officer, declared last week.

"Flying P-51s on bomber escort and strafing missions, we destroyed 75 ships in the air and easily twice that number on the ground," the colonel recapitulated at AAF Redistribution Station No. 1.

Colonel Davis, who is married and makes his home at 1721 S street, N. W., Washington, D. C., took command of the 332nd shortly before it was sent to Italy in January of this year. He pointed out that flying fighter escort on long range bombing missions was a job well suited to his group.

"All the men enjoy it," he added, "because it gives them the best opportunity for aerial combat."

ON STRAFING MISSION

As an example of the lengths to which his men will go to get into the thick of things, the 32-year-old West Pointer told of a mission to Budapest last October when the four squadrons comprising the 332nd were ordered to strafe river and rail traffic along the Danube.

West of Budapest, he related, a pilot spotted a low-flying plane and was sent down to investigate. The pilot shot the plane down, then called for the rest of his squadron.

"They were over an airfield where fliers were practicing landings and takeoffs," said the Colonel. "They joined the traffic pattern and shot down four more ME-109s. On their way up to rejoin the group they picked up four Heinkel IIIs and after a series of passes got them all.

DESTROYS SHIPS

The squadron headed by the Colonel then proceeded up the Danube and strafed oil barges and railway trains. A third squadron located another airfield and destroyed 18 ships on the ground, while the fourth came across a motor park and destroyed or damaged a fleet of trucks.

"Not bad for one five-hour mission," added the Colonel. Colonel Davis, who finished West Point in 1936, was instrumental in the formation of the first all-Negro fighter squadron—the 99th. He took the 99th overseas as its commanding officer in April 1943, and it remained a separate unit for 14 months until absorbed by the 332nd Fighter Group.

"While a separate unit the 99th made a good name for itself," said the Colonel. "It destroyed 17 planes in the air and many more on the ground, but those kills were really by-products, since the squadron worked mostly in support of ground troops. It did its best work early in the Anzio campaign when it got eight in one day."

Colonel Davis holds the Legion of Merit, the DFC, and the Air Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters.

332nd Passes Century Mark

AFRO-American

Baltimore, Md.

Fighter Pilots Finish 101st Mission Monday

SIX GET DFC

11-9-44

Baltimorean Among Four Made Captains

By ART CARTER

AFRO War Correspondent with U.S. Troops in Italy

[Copyright. Reproduction in whole or in part expressly forbidden.]

FIFTEENTH AAF AIRBASE, Italy.—On the theory that the first 100 missions are the toughest, the worst is over for the 332nd Mustang Fighter Group, as a unit, chalked up its century mission mark, Saturday, while providing escort protection for heavy bombers to Gyor, Hungary, and slipped past the number, Monday, on a similar aerial assignment through misty skies over war-torn Germany.

11-4-44

Six More Get DFC

The names of six more pilots were added to the group's honor roll as recipients of the Distinguished Flying Cross as it rounded out a long string of successful assorted missions in five different countries as part of the 15th AAF.

They are:

Capts. Edward C. Gleed, Lawrence, Kans.; Andrew D. Turner, Washington; Dudley M. Watson, Frankfort, Ky.; Wendell O. Pruitt, St. Louis, Mo.; **Melvin T. Jackson**, Baltimore; Alfonza W. Davis, Omaha, Neb.

All citations stressed the extraordinary achievements of the individual flyers in leading flights that wreaked havoc on enemy aircraft and military installations during particularly important missions over Hungary, France, Austria and Germany during July and August.

11-4-44

The happiest pilot among the sextet gaining coveted honors is Captain Fruitt, who clicked off his seventieth mission, Monday, and looks forward to a possible trip home.

Award of the DFC's to the x makes ten DFC's that the group has won since joining the 15th, June 7, in a switch from the 12th AAF.

In this brief span of time, the group's pilots also have received over 120 air medals and clusters, and its commanding officer, Col. Benjamin O. Davis, has been decorated with the Legion of Merit in addition to the DFC.

Now Flying P-51's

The group was originally flying P-47 Thunderbolts, but changed to P-51's shortly after joining the 15th. It has participated in all kinds of strategic missions though its principal task has been bomber escort work, for which the unit has been highly commended by commanding officers of numerous bomber groups as well as Major General Nathan F. Twining, commanding general of the 15th. 11-4-44

Its pilots have engaged in danger-fraught strafing attacks as well as air and sea rescues. It has on numerous occasions escorted C-47 transports that were evacuating Allied airmen from enemy occupied countries.

Its victory board shows seventy-five enemy planes destroyed, seventeen of which were garnered while flying with the 12th AAF. In addition, the scoreboard reveals 214 enemy aircraft destroyed on the ground, together with a large number of enemy rolling stock, gun emplacements, communication lines and airdromes in Hungary, France, Poland, Germany, Austria, Rumania, Czechoslavakia, Yugoslavia, Greece and Italy.

Another victory against the enemy took place June 25 when a group of flyers sunk an enemy destroyer in the harbor at Trieste. No celebration marked the group's 100th mission in keeping with the commander's belief that the victory parades can wait until the war is won. 11-4-44

Thus, when the snubnosed, clipped winged, little silver ships slipped in after the century mission had been completed, the hard-working, unsung ground crews—the real heroes in this air warfare—pulled up their sleeves, selected the right tools and went to work preparing the ships for mission No. 101.

Major Roberts Promoted

Maj. George S. Roberts, who recently returned to retake command of the 99th Squadron, has been elevated to deputy group commander, second in command to Colonel Davis, while Capt. Alfonza W. Davis, who previously served in that capacity, is the pioneer squadron's new command officer.

Four officers were promoted from first lieutenants to captains. They are William A. (Wild Bill) Campbell, Tuskegee; Eugene D. T. Weaver, 1647 Ellsworth Street, Philadelphia; Clarke L. Smith, Jr., of NYC and Baltimore; Harry Shepherd, Jamaica, N.Y., the latter in the squadron engineering office.

Only Campbell and Sheppard are pilots. Weaver is group public relations personnel and equipment officer, while Smith is squadron medical officer. 11-4-44

332nd Fighter Group Ends Year With Record As Unit

12-29-44

ATLANTIC CITY, N. J.—Force in Italy, has flown more than 100 missions and has stationed with the 15th Air

In less than one year the all-Negro 332nd Fighter Group, firmly established itself as an efficient, hard-hitting outfit, Colonel Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., the Group's commanding officer, year-old West Pointer told of a mission to Budapest last October when the four squadrons comprising the 332nd were ordered to strafe river and rail traffic along the Danube.

West of Budapest, he related, a pilot spotted a low-flying plane and was sent down to investigate. The pilot shot the plane down, then called for the rest of his squadron.

"They were over an airfield where fliers were practising landings and takeoffs," said the Colonel. "They joined the traffic pattern and shot down four more ME-109s. On their way up to rejoin the group they picked up four Heinkel 111s and after a series of passes got them all.

The squadron headed by the Colonel then proceeded up the Danube and strafed oil barges and railway trains. A third squadron located another airfield and destroyed 18 ships on the ground, while the fourth came across a motor park and destroyed or damaged a fleet of trucks.

"Not bad for one five-hour mission," added the Colonel.

Colonel Davis, who finished West Point in 1936, was instrumental in the formation of the first all-Negro fighter squadron—the 99th. He took the 99th overseas as its commanding officer in April 1943, and it remained a separate unit for 14 months until absorbed by the 332nd Fighter Group.

"While a separate unit the 99th made a name for itself," said the Colonel. "It destroyed 17 planes in the air and many more on the ground, but those kills were really by-products, since the squadron worked mostly in support of ground troops. It did its best work early in the Anzio campaign when it got eight in one day."

Colonel Davis holds the Legion of Merit, the DFC, and the Air Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters.

As an example of the lengths to which his men will go to get into the thick of things, the 32-year-old West Pointer told of a mission to Budapest last October when the four squadrons comprising the 332nd were ordered to strafe river and rail traffic along the Danube.

West of Budapest, he related, a pilot spotted a low-flying plane and was sent down to investigate. The pilot shot the plane down, then called for the rest of his squadron.

"They were over an airfield where fliers were practising landings and takeoffs," said the Colonel. "They joined the traffic pattern and shot down four more ME-109s. On their way up to rejoin the group they picked up four Heinkel 111s and after a series of passes got them all.

The squadron headed by the Colonel then proceeded up the Danube and strafed oil barges and railway trains. A third squadron located another airfield and destroyed 18 ships on the ground, while the fourth came across a motor park and destroyed or damaged a fleet of trucks.

"Not bad for one five-hour mission," added the Colonel.

Colonel Davis, who finished West Point in 1936, was instrumental in the formation of the first all-Negro fighter squadron—the 99th. He took the 99th overseas as its commanding officer in April 1943, and it remained a separate unit for 14 months until absorbed by the 332nd Fighter Group.

"While a separate unit the 99th made a name for itself," said the Colonel. "It destroyed 17 planes in the air and many more on the ground, but those kills were really by-products, since the squadron worked mostly in support of ground troops. It did its best work early in the Anzio campaign when it got eight in one day."

Colonel Davis holds the Legion of Merit, the DFC, and the Air Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters.

down, then called for the rest of his squadron. 12-29-44

"They were over an airfield where fliers were practicing landings and takeoffs," said the Colonel. "They joined the traffic pattern and shot down four more ME-109s. On their way up to rejoin the group they picked up four Heinkel 111s and after a series of passes got them all.

The squadron headed by the Colonel then proceeded up the Danube and strafed oil barges and railway trains. A third squadron located another airfield and destroyed 18 ships on the ground, while the fourth came across a motor park and destroyed or damaged a fleet of trucks.

"Not bad for one five-hour mission," added the Colonel.

47a-1944

332nd. Fighter Group

OFF ON NEW MISSION

Defender-
Chicago, Ill
1-8-44

Lt. Col. Benjamin A. Davis, Jr., commander of the all-Negro 332nd Fighter group, poses with his wife, the former Agatha Scott of New Haven, Conn., at Selfridge Field, Mich., before the outfit departed for parts unknown to participate in the coming great offensive against the Axis.

Fighter Group Off

The 332nd Fighter Group which has been going through its paces at Selfridge Field, Mich., for the past year, has already departed for an unknown destination. Commanded by Lt. Col. Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., who headed the 99th Pursuit Squadron in its baptism of fire in North Africa and Italy, this unit consists of several squadrons with full complements of ground crew and auxiliaries. 1-8-44

The 332nd is equipped with better and faster planes than the 99th and is expected to chalk up a more splendid record than even the 99th when it clashes with the foe.

Meanwhile, the other big outfit that all Negro eyes are watching, the 93rd Division, is in the last stages of desert training in California and will be shoving off soon. With all rumors of the "busting" of the 93rd hotly denied by the War Department, it is definitely assured that the hard-fighting division will be assigned to a combat theatre of warfare within the next few weeks.

It is also known that a number of new Negro units have arrived in England in past weeks, and these troops are expected to be in on the "kill" when the Allies launch their smash blow across the English Channel at the Inner Fortress of Hitler. 1-8-44

Word from New Guinea also indicates that Negro outfits now in staging areas for final clearance and inspection before battle will be blasting the Japs out of South Pacific island strongholds before long. In fact there is some belief that Negro troops played a part in the new drive General MacArthur launched in New Guinea this week with his surprise landing far up on the northern coast.

Proof that colored soldiers are finally getting into the heat of battle was further confirmed this week by the increased number of casualties reported. These lists are expected to be but a forerunner of much larger lists when the big push

332nd Pilots Leave;

Defender- Chicago, Ill.

93rd Set For Action

1-8-44

(Defender Washington Bureau)

WASHINGTON — On half a dozen fronts round the world, Negro combat troops are poised today ready for the final big offensive against the Axis!

The Defender through confidential sources this week learned that not only are Negro ground and air units to play a major role in the big drive in the Far East against the Japanese but are to be given a leading part in the coming Second Front in Europe under the command of General Dwight Eisenhower.

All the way from the steaming New Guinea jungles to the wet, muddy mountains of India, from the foggy camps of England to the chilly muck of Italy, colored soldiers for the first time will be assigned by the War Department in key posts in the big push.

Already some outfits have gone into action and displayed high fighting qualities. But perhaps the biggest role to be assayed by Negro units will go to the all-Negro 332nd Fighter Group of Negro pilots and ground crew and the highly-trained 93rd Division, first Negro division activated in World War II.

Possible Collapse of 332nd Denied

WASHINGTON (ANP) — Reports that the 332nd Fighter Group, commanded by Col. B. O. Davis, Jr., and now fighting in Italy, is threatened with possible collapse as a unit were denied here last week.

Then denial followed publication in the newspaper PM of a

Wife Proud of Negro Air Hero

Lt. Givings, Air Pilot, Reported Killed In Italy

4-22-44

RICHMOND, Va. — (ANP) — Second Lt. Clemenceau McAdoo Givings, a resident here and member of the 100th Fighter Squadron, has been killed in action somewhere in Italy and was buried in a United States cemetery on March 19.

The son of Mr. and Mrs. Noel Givings, Lt. Givings, of this city, Lt. was the first colored resident Richmond to win his wings and commission in the army air corps. His death is said to have resulted from a forced landing somewhere in coastal waters after his plane developed engine trouble while on patrol duty.

A graduate of Armstrong high school, Lt. Givings held a B.S. from Virginia Union university where he was both executive and cadet captain during his attended on a newspaper scholarship. He entered Tuskegee in October, 1942, and was graduated commissioned a second lieutenant, May 28, 1943. Before he entered the army, Givings was employed as a reporter and photographer on the Norfolk Journal and Guide.

All Qualified Men Trained

"They want replacements, so that they can come home. There simply are not enough candidates who do not care to go on any mission at all, but want to come home.

"There are enough people in Italy. The units in Italy are on the ground a good part of the time. Ottley listened to people who have resulted in this country. Every qualified man has been trained. The report of men has been sent overseas. The unit will not be allowed to collapse.

"There are sufficient numbers of men in training to keep them well supplied. The statement that the number of pilots being trained has been reduced is not true. The number of pilots being trained has been increased."

LT. WALTER PALMER

Lt. Walter Palmer, in the So. Pacific. 7-21-44

First Lieutenant Walter Palmer, a sergeant stationed at Bougainville of 3762 Park Ave., Bronx, piloting a Mustang Fighter on the Italian front along with his buddies downed 11 Nazi fighter planes the other day. They were escorting Flying Fortresses on a bombing mission when the Nazis attacked and the Negro lads went to work on them.

Second Lieutenant Clarence Lester, of Chicago, knocked out three Nazi planes before the air battle ended. Besides 1st Lt. Palmer, two other New York boys scored in the action, which set a new record for the group. They were 2nd Lt. Lee Archer, of 350 W. 119 St., and 2nd Lt. Hugh Warner, of 140 W. 115 St.

Informed of the good news about her husband, Mrs. Rosaline Palmer, 22, smiled happily. "That's what he wanted to do most of all, get close enough to those Nazis to show they weren't such supermen. In his last letter he said he wouldn't trim the mustache [illegible] started to grow when he [illegible] has until he got his first plane. I imagine he's already done the job. I'm so proud of him."

Second Lieutenant Lee Archer, who is 23, finished his training at [illegible] wings and was commissioned a second lieutenant, May 28, 1943, before he entered the army air corps. He was born in Yonkers, and was a reporter and photographer for the Norfolk Journal and Guide. He attended Haaren High School. He married on June 30, last year, the day that he completed his training. A younger brother, Calvin, 20, is [illegible] wanted to be a fireman and just prior to his induction had passed tests for the job.

7-21-44

The young wife is expecting a baby next month which she hopes will look like Walter. They were [illegible] Tuskegee at the same time as Walter. They were married on June 30, last year, the day that he completed his training. A younger brother, Calvin, 20, is [illegible] wanted to be a fireman and just prior to his induction had passed tests for the job.

DFC Winners: Proudly wearing Distinguished Flying Crosses are First Lieutenants Clarence D. Lester (left) of Chicago and Jack D. Holsclaw of Spokane, Wash., pilots of the 332d Fighter Group in Italy. They received the awards from Brigadier General Benjamin O. Davis, Negro General, on behalf of the War Department for "materially assisting" our successes in the Mediterranean Theater of Operations.

Ben Davis Leads 332nd On Air Convoy Missions In Italy

Men Flying Airacobras

By OLLIE HARRINGTON,
Courier War Correspondent

NAPLES, Italy—NOW IT CAN BE TOLD . . . The 332nd all-Negro fighter group, comprised of three squadrons and flying the famous P-39 Airacobras, a ship that can match the best in the German Luftwaffe, has been doing convoy protection and harbor patrol missions along the Italian west coast for the past five weeks. This group has vowed that it will add lustre to the already brilliant record established in this theatre of operation by the 99th fighter squadron.

I came to this war theatre with the 332nd, under the command of Lt. Colonel Benjamin O. Davis, Jr. . . . who led the 99th in its first baptism of fire in the North African campaign and returned to America to give his knowledge of air fighting to this group then assembled at Selfridge Field, Mich. Our group is now established in Italy as a part of the Mediterranean Costal Air Force and we expect to see plenty of action when our offensive gets under way and "Jerry" throws everything he has got at us.

The 332nd is composed of three squadrons, making a total of four squadrons . . . complete with ground crew personnel . . . engaged in the Italian campaign.

Recently elevated to the rank of squadron commanders are Lieutenants Lee Rayford, of Washington, D. C., and Edward C. Gleek, of Lawrence, Kan.

"Flying P-51s on bomber escort and strafing missions, we destroyed 75 ships in the air and easily twice that number on the ground," the colonel recapitulated at AAF Redistribution Station No. 1.

Like Aerial Combat

Colonel Davis, who is married and makes his home at 1721 S St., N.W., Washington, D. C., took command of the 332nd shortly before it was sent to Italy in January of this year. He pointed out that flying fighter escort on long range bombing missions was a job well suited to his group.

"All the men enjoy it," he added, "because it gives them the best opportunity for aerial combat."

As an example of the lengths to which his men will go to get into the thick of things, the 32-year-old West Pointer told of a mission to Budapest last October when the four squadrons comprising the 332nd were ordered to strafe river and rail traffic along the Danube.

West of Budapest, he related, a pilot spotted a low-flying plane and was sent down to investigate. The pilot shot the plane down, then called for the rest of his squadron.

"They were over an airfield where fliers were practising landings and takeoffs," said the Colonel. "They joined the traffic pattern and shot down four more ME-109s. On their way up to rejoin the group they picked up four Heinkel 111s and after a series of passes got them all.

The squadron headed by the Colonel then proceeded up the Danube and strafed oil barges and railway trains. A third squadron located another airfield and destroyed 18 ships on the ground, while the fourth came across a motor park and destroyed or damaged a fleet of trucks.

Good Work

"No bad for one five-hour mission," added the Colonel.

Colonel Davis, who finished West Point in 1936, was instrumental in the formation of the first all-Negro fighter squadron—the 99th. He took the 99th overseas as its commanding officer in April 1943, and it remained a separate unit for 14 months until absorbed by the 332nd Fighter Group.

"While a separate unit the 99th made a good name for itself," said the Colonel. "It destroyed 17 planes in the air and many more on the ground, but those kills were really by-products, since the squadron worked mostly in support of ground troops. It did its best work early in the Anzio campaign when it got eight in one day."

Colonel Davis holds the Legion of Merit, the DFC, and the Air Medal with three Oak Leaf clusters.

Hard-Hitting Unit Commended By Commander

Davis Relates Experience Over Southern Europe

ATLANTIC CITY, NEW JERSEY —(SNS) — In less than one year the all-Negro 332nd Fighter Group, stationed with the 15th Air Force in Italy, has flown more than 100 missions and has firmly established itself as an efficient, hard-hitting outfit, Colonel Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., the Group's commanding officer, declared here before returning overseas.

"Flying P-51s on bomber escort and strafing missions, we destroyed 75 ships in the air and easily twice that number on the ground," the Colonel recapitulated at AAF Redistribution Station Number 1.

Colonel Davis, who is married and makes his home at 1721 S St., N. W., Washington, D. C., took command of the 332nd shortly before it was sent to Italy in January of this year. He pointed out that flying fighter escort on long range bombing missions was a job well suited to his group.

MEN ENJOY IT

"All the men enjoy it," he added, "because it gives them the best opportunity for aerial combat."

As an example of the lengths to which his men will go to get into the thick of things, the 32-year-old West Pointer told of a mission to Budapest last October when the four squadrons comprising the 332nd were ordered to strafe river and rail traffic along the Danube.

West of Budapest, he related a pilot spotted a low-flying plane and was sent down to investigate. The pilot shot the plane down, then called for the rest of his squadron.

"They were over an airfield where fliers were practising landings and taking offs," said the Colonel. "They joined the traffic pattern and shot down four more ME-109s. On their way up to rejoin the group they picked up four Heinkel 111s and after a series of passes got them all.

STRAFE BARGES, TRAINS

The squadron headed by the Colonel then preceeded up the Danube and strafed oil barges and railway trains. A third squadron located another airfield and destroyed 18 ships on the ground, while the fourth came across a motor park and destroyed or damaged a fleet of trucks.

"Not bad for one five-hour mission," added the Colonel.

Colonel Davis, who finished West Point in 1936, was instrumental in the formation ofthe first al-Negro fighter squadron — the 99th. He took the 99th overseas as its commanding officer in April 1943, and it remained a separate unit for 14 months until absorbed by the 332nd Fighter Group.

"While a separate unit the 99th made a good name for itself," said the Colonel. "It destroyed 17 planes the Colonel. "It destroyed 17 planes in the air and many more on the ground, but those kills were really by-products, since the squadron worked mostly in support of ground troops. It did its best work early in the Anzio campaign when it got eight in one day.

Colonel Davis holds the Legion of Merit, the DFC and the Air Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters.

Pilots Like to Be In Action

Negro Outfit Sets Record Of Efficiency

ATLANTIC CITY, N. J. — In less than one year the all-Negro 332nd Fighter Group, stationed with the 15th Air Force in Italy, has flown more than 100 missions and has firmly established itself as an efficient, hard-hitting outfit, Col. Benjamin O. Davis Jr., the group's commanding officer, declared here.

Pilots Like---

47a-1944

Tuskegee Army Air Field

TAAF Training Replacements

By Francis Yancey

TUSKEGEE ARMY AIR FIELD; TUSKEGEE, Ala.---This airfield where colored combat pilots and skilled aviation technicians are trained has proven itself to the Army and the world at large.

Focal point at first of a derisive press and a questioning civilian segment, this jim crow aviation training base, the only one in the country for the training of our flyers, has progressed steadily since it graduated its first class of five flying officers. It is now truning out many hundreds of highly competent combat pilots yearly.

Created a little over two years ago from the sweat and toil of an America preparing for war, Tuskegee Field, in this short span of time is recognized as one of the outstanding Army Air Bases in the United States.

The magnitude of this huge training center is impressive. The flight strips, hangars and control tower, the repair shops, barracks, mess halls, administration and ground school buildings; recreation halls and officers club are some of the physical properties which meet the eye.

Use Formulas of Death

Today, in the froht Fine combat areas, Tuskegees highly trained graduates are applying all the scientific formulas of death they were taught here at this field.

The decline in the number, or least effectiveness of Axis fighter planes and our new offensive strategy of saturation bombing has created surplus of fighter pilots on the combat fronts.

As a result, Tuskegee, like many other pilot training centers, is now providing a controlled output of replacement fighter pilots and concentrating on the training of twin-engined bomber pilots, according to Colonel Noel F. Parrish, white, commanding officer of the post.

The Army Air Corps has no immediate plans for the formation of any new fighter squadrons or groups and the output of future graduates from this field will be fifty per cent replacement pilots for the 99th Squadron and 332nd Fighter Group, both overseas, and pilots for the 477th Bombardment Group now being activated at Godman Field, Ky.

Afro-American Baltimore, Md. 6-3-44

2 Tuskegee Graduates, Members of Air Force Meet With Successful Missions Against Enemy

TUSKEGEE INSTITUTE, Ala.---Two Tuskegee men, now in the Armed Forces overseas, have figured in the news recently because of their successful missions against the enemy. Captain Joseph D. Elsberry, 23, and First Lieutenant Fred E. Hutchins, 24, are the Tuskegeeans who have successfully completed combat missions of sufficient importance to merit recognition of high official command.

News releases, certified and passed by the press censor from "Somewhere in Italy," regarding the missions performed by the two young Tuskegee officers, follow:

"15th AAF In Italy--Captain Joseph D. Elsberry, 23, P-51 Fighter Pilot, son of Mrs. Beulah E. Elsberry of 114 Washington Street, Langston, Oklahoma, shot down his fourth enemy aircraft, while escorting bombers to targets in Southern Germany.

Capt. Elsberry is a member of the first all-Negro Fighter Group in the Army Air Forces. The group which formerly flew patrol and convoy missions with the Coastal Air Force, is now a part of the 15th AAF, flying mustangs as escort for heavy bombers.

The young pilot is leading the group for individual victories and states, "Speed plus maneuverability which is found in the P-51 is the answer to any pilots dream."

Prior to entry into the Army, Capt. Elsberry was a student at Tuskegee Institute, Tuskegee, Alabama."

The release covering the mission performed by Lieut. Hutchins, also sent from "Somewhere In Italy," reads as follows: "First Lieutenant Fred E. Hutchins 24, P-51 Mustang Fighter Pilot of 208 North Dowling Street, Donaldsonville, Ga., shot down his first enemy aircraft while protecting heavy bombers over t targets in Southern Germany.

Lieut. Hutchins is a member of the first all-Negro Fighter Group in the Army Air Forces. It is commanded by Col. B. O. Davis, jr. Formerly the group flew patrol and convoy missions with the Coastal Air Force. It is now a part of the 15th AAF and flying as escort for heavy bombers.

Lieut. Hutchin's formation intercepted some Me-109s in an attempt to attack a formation of bombers. The highly maneuverable P-51 proved far superior to the not too aggressive enemy fighters.

Lieut. Hutchins is a graduate of Tuskegee Institute, Tuskegee Institute, Alabama."

Age--New York, N. Y. 9-2-44

Col. Parrish, TAAF Commander,

Daily World - Atlanta, Ga.

Commended For Democratic Views

10-14-44

Not Partial To Any "Side"; Wants To Make Tuskegee Base The Finest

By DEWILLIE C. BUSH

TUSKEGEE—(A N P)—In the news spotlight currently is Col. Neol F. Parrish, commanding officer of Tuskegee Army Air field, whose Nordic appearance and southern drawl belie his amazingly democratic views.

One of the youngest colonels in the country, he is definitely not regarded as the "colonel, such" by Negroes at the base. Consensus of opinion at Tuskegee is that Col. Parrish is a liberal southerner, not partial to any race (but fully aware of the problems of the Negro) who is doing his darndest to make TAAF recognized as one of the finest bases in the country, and not an experiment.

WELFARE OF BOTH

"I am looking out for the welfare of both sides and nobody in particular," he told this correspondent in an interiew last week. "Having the boys down here at Tuskegee has helped the race problem in the south considerably, although people are not going to drop tradition immediately. The problem is a deep seated one and will take time to erase."

10-14-44

This Kentucky born and southern reared officer talked of the Negro's progress in the arts, theatre, sports, music, movies, and education. He is as well versed in Negro history and current affairs as any sepia scholar. It is quite evident from the enthusiasm which he reveals while talking on the subject that the Negro and his problems are a source of never ending interest to him. Col. Parrish has made and is continuing to make a study of the sociological aspect of the question.

When his attention was called to the unjust and sometimes brutal treatment of Tuskegee soldiers by white policemen in the nearby town of Tuskegee, Col. Parrish explained that he considered his personal contact with the white authorities there as highly beneauthorities there as highly beneficial in dealing with the various cases. He says that he likes his command and calls the men at TAAF "a grand bunch of boys."

10-14-44

WANTS TO KNOW ANSWER

"I wish I knew the answer to all this," he said perplexedly again referring to the south's attitude toward Negroes. "I think both Negro and white leaders could be a little less compromising in their demands in order to reach a basis for working out problems. He voiced the opinion that the problem could be partially remedied if Negroes had more efficient public relations experts to publicize the race, and he is certain that the problem is not one of the Negro alone, but of the entire nation.

Col. Parrish is an army man by profession, a graduate of Kelly field, Texas. In civilian life he was employed in the accounting department of a large oil company in Houston. He received his college training at Houston and earlier schooling in Alabama and Georgia.

10-14-44

Yet, this southern born and reared colonel speaks intelligently of "Anna Lucasta," the U. N. I. A., the Negro pess, admires Paul Robeson and Lena Horne and seems to be seeking a way to help erase the intense hatred of some whites for Negroes. On his desk at the time of the interview were copies of PM, and the Pittsburgh Courier. The latter has carried an expose on Tuskegee.

Typically a Texan, tall, lean, smiling, Col. Parrish is also typical of the new white American who realizes that the problems of even the smallest minority have their effect on the welfare of the whole nation.

Col. Noel Parrish Of Tuskegee Army Air Field Speaks To Birmingham Audience

Age - New York Post

BIRMINGHAM, Ala.— Keynoting the public session of the two-day National Council of the Southern Negro Youth Congress last Sunday, Col. Noel F. Parrish, Commanding Officer of Tuskegee Army Air Field, declared that the training program at Tuskegee rigidly adheres to the same rules applying to all others and that Tuskegee, though first considered experimental, has held up to the same standards as all other schools.

6-3-44

At Tuskegee, the Colonel said, the first class of Air Cadets trained under a burden—they were expected to succeed or fail as Negroes rather than as individuals. In aviation, he added, each man fights alone against the forces of nature and his success or failure should be judged on an individual basis.

Declaring that the present world-wide conflict is not a race war, but a war to destroy fascism, Col. Parrish exploded the myth that Japan is a friend of "colored" peoples, pointing to the Japanese rape of China as an illustration. Although there are many conflicts between Negro and white in this country, he said, there exists no war between races here and through a process of education and understanding, the principles of democratic government can work in America. Col. Parrish urged Negro youth to try and understand prejudiced white people and to seek to influence and to educate them to a better appreciation of the role Negro Americans are playing in our country's development.

6-3-44

Col. Parris pointed to the excellent record which the cadets trained at Tuskegee are making overseas as evidence of the high standards maintained at Tuskegee, and the fact that the laws of learning apply equally to all peoples.

Also on the program were Miss Sue Patrick, white, student at Howard College in Birmingham who pledged unity with Negro youth of the South in solving common problems; Miss Rose Mae Withers, National Student Secretary of the Y. W. C. A. and President of the Southern Negro Youth Congress in guaranteeing our full participation in the war and the peace to follow; and Louis E. Burnham, organizational secretary of the Southern Negro Youth Congress, who presented the Youth Congress campaign for full equality for Negro soldiers in the armed forces.

6-3-44

Honored guests were Mrs. Bessie Griffin, mother of William Griffin, Birmingham 99th Pursuit Squadron flyer, who is now a prisoner of war, and Mr. and Mrs. Richard Macon whose son was trained at Tuskegee under Col. Parrish.

Facts About the Army Air Corps

Afro American - Baltimore, Md.

By FRANCIS YANCEY

More colored cadets are in training to be pilots at Tuskegee Army Air Field than the entire U.S. Army Air Corps was training ten years ago.

6-3-44

A recent report from headquarters of the 12th Air Force in the Italian Theatre of Operations reported the 99th Fighter Squadron had the best record for the maintenance of aircraft in that sector.

At Maxwell Field, Ala., Tuskegee cadets fly to 38,000 feet above sea level, using oxygen equipment without leaving the ground. Students get their high altitude flying in a special high altitude pressure chamber which can simulate atmospheric conditions up to 50,000 feet above sea level.

Course Costs $25,000

The 15-month training course at Tuskegee offered by the Army Air Corps is the equivalent of a tuition free scholarship worth $25,000.

6-3-44

This would be the cost to a civilian including finished courses in radio, navigation, meterology, flying instruction and more than 130 hours flying time in each of the stages.

Only 16 per cent of the cadets who enter Tuskegee finish the 15-month course and emerge full-fledged pilots.

One pilot flying a single-engine plane has to have a ground crew of 12 men. For a twin engine ship the figure is almost tripled.

One 2000 lb. bomb costs around $4,000 — now you figure out the cost of each 2000 plane bombing raid over Berlin, each plane carrying two or more of these big babies.

TAAF Aviation Cadets Are Proudest, Busiest in World

Afro American — Baltimore, Md.

6-3-44

500 Strong, They're Undergoing Training That Is No Bed of Roses; Day Is 16 Hours Long

By FRANCIS YANCEY

TUSKEGEE ARMY AIR FIELD, Ala.—Among the proudest and the busiest men in the world are the more than 500 members of the Aviation Cadet Corps at this huge training base. They are proud of the history of the corps of which they are a part and the part their forerunners, the 99th and the 332nd, products of this field, have had in its making.

Their bearing, manner and every action reflect self-conscious pride in the fact that they are a part of the cream of the colored youth of America, assembled here to meet the requirements of what are probably the most intensive and arduous training courses in military history.

Francis Yancey, AFRO staff artist, gives us a pre-take off smile before taking a hop in a twin-engine trainer with Major Clay Albright, director of advance transition training at Tuskegee Army Air Field. Next week, Mr. Yancey brings us a story and sketches on Tuskegee's flight surgeons, plus an interview with Aviation Cadet Rhohelia Webb, twin-engine cadet pilot.

A cadet upon receiving his appointment to the Air Corps after passing his physical examination is sent to the Basic Training Center at Keesler Field, Miss., where he gets his classification and first aviation cadet training.

He is later assigned here for on-the-line-flight-training, which familiarizes him with the mechanical devices and instruments of a plane.

From here he goes to the 320th College Training Detachment, Tuskegee Institute, for a short academic brush up under civilian instructors.

No Bed of Roses

Cadets' life in the pre-flight sections is no bed of roses. He is constantly on the go from 5:30 in the morning to 9:30 p.m.

Not only is he required to learn the mathematics, physics, aircraft identification, code signaling, and other subjects which a flyer must master, but at the same time he must acquire the discipline and training necessary to fit him to be an officer, plus the physical development needed to be a combat pilot.

Budding pilots first get their feet off the ground in primary training at the Institute Civilian Contract Flying School, under the direction of Pennsylvania-bred Chief Pilot Alfred Anderson, who probably has more flying time than any other colored flyer in the United States.

Chief Anderson has supervised the first airborne training step of every colored cadet who has ever received his wings in the U.S. Air Corps. Half of the cadet's time is spent flying and half in the classroom.

As a part of the 66th Army Air Training Detachment, Moten Field, Ala., the cadet gets his first flying training, solos, learns elementary formations and contact navigation in light, slow, two-seater primary trainer planes (Piper Cubs); also a Sunday trip on his own time to Maxwell Field for a high altitude chamber test.

Average TAAF Cadet is 20

The average Tuskegee Army Air Ficld cadet is 20 years old.

Twenty-five per cent have had one year of college; 70 per cent are high school graduates, and the remainder have had some college training.

The training program is so intense that nearly the equivalent of two years of college mathematics is crammed into 20 or more lessons. Eliminations (wash outs) are high but most cadets with a good solid high school foundation get through with passing grades.

Army Air School here, where his instructors are all Air Corps officers. He is assigned to basic training.

Basic Critical Period

This is a critical period in the cadet's progress through this post. Basic school appears to be the phase with the hardest all-round curriculum. The difficulty is that the men, before basic, don't know enough about flying to be able to absorb and retain the combat-proved-facts that they must learn and afterwards they are so busy learning other tactical and emergency procedures that this middle course remains somewhat murky.

The training courses are actually divided into three parts: academic, military or tactical and physical development.

Capt. Harold D. Martin of Washington, former Miner Teachers' College instructor and well-known CIAA official, is director of the Cadet Ground School. He is assisted by Lt. Victor E. Reef of St. Louis, Mo.

Facts are the substance of this training, according to Capt. Martin. The cadet must be taught so well that there is no danger of him forgetting in the heat of combat, where even the process of recall is achingly slow.

Today's cadet learns far more rapidly than the peacetime cadet. He has to. Before the war, when pilots were relatively few, the custom was for a rather leisurely manner of training stage changes. That is not possible now, for there is far too much to be learned, and too little time to learn it.

Failures Traced to Schooling

Most cadet failures in ground school can be traced back to the school system under which they came up. Northern and Middle-western city schooled cadets have a quicker grasp when faced with academic subjects, than their Southern fellow cadets who are products of a separate and most times inferior jim-crow schooling.

Dislike of mathematics in high school is most of the cadets' major drawback.

Basic training makes or breaks a cadet. Here he flies three-ship V-formations, chandelles, lazy eights, and makes simulated forced landings. He gets extensive practice in night flying.

He learns to send and receive in radio code and how to operate a blinker light, draw weather maps, interpret weather reports, and how to fly blind. By the time he finishes, he has had 130 hours in the air.

The cadet who has been classified as a fighter pilot is sent to Advanced Single Engine School where flies faster and more maneuverable planes.

He begins flying missions, learns dead reckoning and pilotage for navigation and some of the tricks of combat and gunnery.

On the range, he is taught to "swing and lead" his target, and in the gunnery training aids' departments he is instructed by means of deflect and range estimation trainer, an actual pilot's cockpit complete with all instruments, including the Air Corp's famed gunsight and a control stick with a button switch that turns on a remote control beam of light while a miniature airplane moves across a life-like motion picture screen before the trainee.

Hits are tallied by a change in color of the miniature and the score is kept by an electric eye. His big day arrives when he is accepted as ready for transitional training in the P-40 Warhawk or A/P-39 Aircobra.

Twin-Engine School

For the pilots who go to Twin-Engine Advance School, greater emphasis is laid on navigation, radio, first aid and aircraft and naval identification, instrument and formation flying.

Advanced twin-engine cadets receive special training in the use of bombing equipment, shackles, releases, etc. Stress is placed upon the use of oxygen equipment, the various complicated electrical and mechanical systems throughout his plane.

Twin-engine cadets receive six hours intensive transition from single-engine to twin-engine planes, flying dual (with an instructor), then ten hours solo with another cadet, each taking turns as first pilot or plane commander.

The sixth to tenth hour period is the trying time, for if the cadet doesn't show individual ability to take over the solo spot, he is called up for a check ride with an instructor to determine if he is worth carrying along with his class or has to be washed out.

After four hours of cadet dual solo, they start navigation and team riding two cadets to a plane for formation, instrument and night flying.

Added stress is placed on instrument, formation, night and cross-country flying, these subjects being divided all through the advanced twin-engine course.

At the end of ten weeks of this and 70 hours of first pilot time (dual or solo), win-engines cadets are graduated and go to "post-graduate" twin-engine schools to fly the type of bombers they will use in combat.

Among Easterners enrolled in the cadet training program are:

Two Baltimoreans

WASHINGTON: James H. Shepherd, Ronald W. Reeves, Charles J. Quander, Charles W. Cooper.

BALTIMORE: Charles H. Toogood, Rhohelia Webb.

NEWARK: Aaron Herrington, Harry W. Banks.

PHILADELPHIA: James E. Brothers, Donald S. Harris, Jimmy Lanham, Richard S. Armistead, George E. Hardy, Alfred Coleman.

ATLANTIC CITY: William C. Walker, Jr., Morris J. Washington.

New Yorkers Enrolled

BROOKLYN: George L. Bing, Basil W. Allamby, Elbert N. Merriwether, Jr., Bertrand G. Braithwaite, Berram W. Wilson, Edward Bishop, Douglas H. McQuillan, Leonard O. Vaughan.

BUFFALO: Landen L. McCall, Louis S. Grady.

ROCHESTER: Leland H. Pennington.

NEW YORK CITY: Maury M. Reid, Jr., Samuel W. Watts, Jr.

FREEPORT: Thurston L. Gaines.

CORONA: Pablo R. Gonzales.

TARRYTOWN: Clarence C. Conway.

TROY: David A. Seymour.

BRONX COUNTY: John P. Qualles.

Other Pennsylvanians

SWARTHMORE: William E. Rice.

WILLOW GROVE: Milton S. Washington.

PITTSBURGH: James W. Wright, Robert M. Johnson, Edward Harris.

New Jersey Men There

PLAINFIELD: Warren E. Henry.

SPRINGFIELD: Thomas C. Street.

TRENTON: Stepnew C. Kibble.

BLOOMFIELD: Robert E. Darben.

RUTHERFORD: Calvin J. Spann.

GLEN ROCK: Thomas L. Hawkins.

Tuskegee Air Base Editor Mixes Music Drama With Work

Journal & Guide
Norfolk, Va.

TUSKEGEE, Ala. — "But you just can't tie up drama and music with newspaper work," Sgt. Leon E. Smith, editor of the HAWK'S CRY, was told when he took over the helm of that camp newspaper in February, 1943. But "Smitty" proved to the skeptics that it could be done. As a result of his insistence the HAWK'S CRY rose from near — obscurity to become one of the leading mimeograph papers in the Army. 2-5-44

SMITH

"Smitty" has always had a flair for the unconventional. Perhaps his wonderings about the country explain this trait. Born in the all-Negro town of Boley, Okla., he did the opposite of Horace Greeley's famous words — he went east via a short stop — over in the South.

During his brief sojourn in Dixie, Sgt. Smith did a years study at Wiley College in Marshall, Texas. His rich, resonant voice voice aided him in becoming the outstanding member of the drama club and debate team. Finances forced him to quit school. He hitch-hiked to Detroit and got a job as lathe operator with the Ford Motor Company.

CAME INTO OWN

It was in the Motor City that he came into his own. Laboring nights at Ford's, he still found time to attend Wayne University part time. At Wayne he won the State Inter-collegiate Interpretative Reading for his rendition of "The Creation." His spare time was used in organizing the Detroit Contemporary Players, an amateur theatrical group, which became the foremost of its kind in that city.

It was while portraying historical Negro character roles over Station WWJ, Detroit, that he came into the limelight. The Wayne University of Speech arranged an interview with Canada Lee, star of "Native Son," over that station. 2-5-44

When asked whom he considered the most capable successor for his role in "Native Son," Mr. Lee replied, "the young Negro actor who appears over this station, Mr. Leon Smith, shows the greatest promise of anyone I've encountered to date." Those magic words of Lee must have spurred Smith on. Upon receiving his A. B. from Wayne University he took additional study in vocal training at the Detroit Conservatory of Music.

SINGLE AND TWIN ENGINE PILOTS WIN AT TUSKEGEE

Courier—Pittsburgh, Pa.
2-19-44

This group of eager young birdmen represent the Tuskegee Army Air Field's latest graduating classes of single and twin engine pilots. With wings and commissioners in the Army Air Forces tucked neatly under their belts, they are ready to give Herr Hitler et al a run for their money. 2-19-44

Shown from left to right kneeling), Second Lieutenants George B. Matthews, Los Angeles, Calif.; Charles W. Diggs, Roxbury, Mass.; William H. Farley, Savannah, Ga.; First Lieutenant Louis G. Hill, Indianapolis, Ind.; Second Lieutenants Frederick P. Hicks, San Francisco, Calif.; Charles D. Hill, Washington, D. C., and Winston A. Adkins, Chicago, Ill.

Second row, Second Lieutenant Robert C. Chandler, St. Allegan, Mich.; Flight Officer Leonard R. Willette, Belleville, N. J.; Second Lieutenants Richard S. Harder, Brooklyn, N. Y.; Marion R. Rodgers, Elizabeth, N. J.; Thomas P. Braswell, Buford, Ga.; Thomas G. Patton, South Franklin, Tenn.; Emile G. Clifton, Jr., San Francisco, Calif.; Frank H. Moody, Los Angeles, Calif.; Wilbur F. Long, New Rochelle, N. Y. Cohen M. White, Detroit, Mich., and Henry A. Wise, of Cheriton, Va. 2-19-44

Third row, Second Lieutenants Alfred M. Gorham, Waukesha, Wis.; Thomas L. Gay, Detroit, Mich.; Shelby F. Westbrook, Toledo, Ohio; Richard D. Macon, Birmingham, Ala.; Joseph E. Gordon, Brooklyn, N. Y.; Roger B. Gaiter, Seaside Heights, N. J.; Kenneth I. Williams, Los Angeles, Calif.; Flight Officer Cornelius P. Gould, Pittsburgh, Pa., and Second Lieutenant Ludovic F. Audant from the Haitian Air Force—Photo by AAF Training Command.

Completing the Army Air Forces Training Command course for twin engine pilots were 2nd Lts. Winston A. Allen, Chicago, Ill.; Charles W. Diggs, Roxbury, Mass.; William H. Farley, Savannah, Ga.; and George B. Matthews of Los Angeles, Calif.

Two Haitians In Class

Also in the graduating class of twin engine pilots were 2nd Lts. Ludovic F. Aurant and Delissier G. Nichelas of the Haitian Air Force.

Virginia Cadet Honored

2nd Lt. Henry A. Wise of Cheriton, Va., received the award for being the best all-round cadet in the class. Second and third prizes went to 2nd Lts. Kenneth I. Williams, Los Angeles, Calif., and Richard S. Harder of Brooklyn, N. Y., respectively.

Pherson, director of training, presented wings to the graduates. Student officers receiving wings were 1st Lt. Louis G. Hill of Indianapolis, Ind.; 2nd Lt. Frederick P. Hicks, San Francisco, Calif.; and 2nd Lt. Charles D. Hill of Washington, D. C. All of these student officers completed the twin engine course.

Cadets receiving wings and commissions as single engine pilots included 2nd Lts. Thomas P. Braswell, Buford, Ga.; Robert C. Chandler, St. Allegan, Mich.; Emile G. Clifton Jr., San Francisco, Calif.; Roger B. Gaiter, Seaside Heights, N. J.; Joseph E. Gordon, Brooklyn, N. Y.; Alfred M. Gorham, Waukesha, Wisc.; Richard S. Harder, Brooklyn, N. Y.; Wilbur F. Long, New Rochelle, N. Y.; Richard D. Macon, Birmingham, Ala.; Frank H. Moody, Los Angeles, Calif.; Thomas G. Patton, South Franklin, Tenn.; Marion R. Rodgers, Elizabeth, N. J.; Shelby F. Westbrook, Toledo, Ohio; Cohen M. White, Detroit, Mich.; Kenneth I. Williams, Los Angeles, Calif.; and Henry A. Wise Jr., Cheriton, Va. Appointment flight officers were Cornelius P. Gould of Pittsburgh, Pa., and Leonard R. Willette of Belleville, N. J.

20 Graduates In Class Are After Action

Argus-St. Louis, Mo.
2-18-44

TUSKEGEE INSTITUTE, Ala., Feb. 11—After Mr. Young's well-received address, Col. Noel F. Parrish, Tuskegee Army Air Field commander who has been instrumental in training every one of the 99th pilots, awarded letters of appointment as second lieutenants and flight officers in the Army Air Forces to the graduates. Major Donald S. Mc-

Col. Parrish To Remain On Duty

Daily World

At Tuskegee Was Pioneer In Development Of Ala. Air Field

Atlanta, Ga.
7-19-44

TUSKEGEE— (ANP)— Considerable satisfaction pr meates the officer and enlisted personnel at TAAF since the announcement here Tuesday that Col. Noel F. Parrish, commanding officer of this post, is not to be transferred as had been recently rumored.

Col. Parrish's name is synonymous with the growth and history of the Tuskegee air training program. He came here when it was a hope and a vision. Dr. Patterson, L. O. Washington and Chas. Anderson were struggling with the civilian end of getting the work launched. From the moment he came it was evident that despite the rigor of military procedure, an officer was in charge who had interest in the program, sympathy for some of the social factors involved and who believed that Negro cadets like any other qualified young Americans, could succeed in military aviation.

From its modest beginning in CAA aviation, then its secondary phase at Moten field, the Tuskegee Army Air Field, erected at a cost of some $5,000,000 stands as one of the best equipped and maintained field of its kind in the country. From it have gone all of the colored aviators, whether in pursuit flying or in bombing squadrons, who are in the service of the USA.

In addition to his proficiency

Tuskegee Gets NBC Broadcasts

Peoples Voice—New York, N.Y.
TUSKEGEE ARMY AIRFIELD 7-22-44

—Setting a new precedent in radio broadcasts from army posts, the National Broadcasting Company and its affiliated stations from coast to coast, will air a special

half-hour program commemorating the Third Anniversary of the Tuskegee Army Air Field, on Wednesday, August 9, at 12:15 pm CWT (1:15 pm EWT). The unique broadcast will emanate from the ramp of the flight line here, home of the famed Negro fighter squadrons now making history in the European theatre of operations. 8-5-44

Among the guest speakers will be Major General William O. Butler, Commanding General of the Army Air Forces Eastern Flying Training Command with Headquarters at Maxwell Field, Alabama; Colonel Noel F. Parrish, Commanding Officer of this installation; and veteran combat pilots of the celebrated squadrons. Special music will be featured by the 613th Army Air Forces Band, under the direction of Captain Frank Drye; and the Cadet Glee Club of fifty voices, directed by Sgt. Philip Medley. The program will give to an expected large listening audience, an over-all picture of three years of training Negro pilots for the Army Air Forces Training Command.

Slain Pilot's Mother Visits 'Skegee Base

World — Memphis, Tenn.

8-4-44

TUSKEGEE ARMY AIR FIELD, Ala.; — The name of first Lieutenant Paul Mitchell shall ever inspire the hearts of Tuskegee Army Air Field pilots as they continue to avenge his tragic death. The first member of the 99th to die on foreign soil, is especially remembered here because of the victory housing project here which is named "Mitchell Village," in his honor.

Charming, lovabale Mrs. Harry G. Mitchell, mother of the famous flyer, paid TAAF a visit this week and gazed starry-eyed at the handsome structure named in honor of her son. It was a thrilling experience for her and Miss Janet Sessoms the flyer's fiancee, who also visited Dr. and Mrs. Bennett Jackson of Tuskegee.

8-4-44

Mrs. Mitchell, who came from her home in Washington, D. C., in 1942, to see Paul graduate, said: "I can't express my emotions at the tribute paid my son."

NBC Airs 3rd Anniversary Of Tuskegee Army Air Unit

Daily World Atlanta, Ga.

8-15-44

TUSKEGEE ARMY AIR FIELD, Ala.—A general wave of excitement enveloped Tuskegeee Army Air Field as most of its G. I. and civilian personnel stopped work for one day when the Third Anniversary Celebration activities got underway August 9 with a special half hour radio broadcasts over NBC emanating from the flight line. The script, written by Privates George B. Oliver and Bill Chase, and edited by Radio Branch, War Department Bureau of Public Relations, Washington, D. C., paid fitting tribute to the many Negro fighter pilots now engaged in aerial combat overseas who received their training at this station since its activation three years ago. 8-15-44

Long before the broadcast was scheduled, the field was jammed with visitors from all sections of the country, to witness the history-making event. Major newsreel photographers were on hand to record the program for world-wide audiences; correspondents and reporters from the nation's press made early bids for accommodations. Adding a feminine touch to the occasion were countless WAC members from Fort Benning, Georgia, who were impressive with their military bearing.

GEN. BUTLER SPEAKS

The ramp of the flight line was filled for the broadcast. Above, the sky was filled with echelons of fighter, medium bomber and advanced training planes. Highlighted by the brilliant playing of the 613th AAF Band, under the direction of Captain Drye, and the singing of the Cadet Glee Club, directed by Sgt. Philip Medley, the program presented a vivid picture of the over-all training activities at TAAF. Distinguished guest and honored speaker on the broadcast was Major General William O. Butler, Commanding General of the Eastern Flying Training Command, Maxwell Field, Alabama. Other participants on this nation-wide hook-up included Col. Noel F. Parrish, Commanding Officer of Tuskegee Army Air Field; Captain Clarence Jamison of Cleveland, Ohio, recently returned veteran of the 99th Fighter Squadron; Aviation Cadet Otto McClarrin of Washington, D. C.; Miss Naomi Polkinghorne, Pensacola, Florida; M/Sgt. James Blackstone, Newark, N. J.; and Sgt. Leon E. Smith, Detroit, Mich. 8-15-44

ROUND OF ENTERTAINMENT

Visitors were well supplied with musical entertainment by three outstanding bands from the vicinity, on hand to lend added colour. Besides TAAF's own band, guest bands were a 56-piece aggregation from Maxwell Field and units from Ft. Benning and Gunter Field. The band schedule called for appearances by all three musical units to play for a Track Meet. The Gunter Field band played for the impressive Dress Parade, featuring officer, cadet and enlisted personnel of the Post at Retreat Ceremonies on the Parade Ground. Immediately following this, the TAAF Band provided a musical backdrop for a mass song festival in the Post Amphitheater. Not long after the strains of singing faded, the Maxwell Field band was presented in concert. Climaxing the festivities of the afternoon, an Anniversary Ball was held in one of the hangars, with swing combos from the trio of military bands supplying the music.

NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENT

Age — New York, N.Y.

LAST week, the Tuskegee Army Air Field, Tuskegee, Ala., celebrated its third anniversary with a gala program lasting a week. Hundreds of visitors joined the several thousand enlisted men and officers at the field in the celebration. The presence of several officers who had seen service overseas flying and fighting against the enemy added to the occasion.

Of one thing, all can be certain. Even the most prejudiced white man, who had doubted the ability of Negroes to master the intricate mechanisms of the aeroplane and who had also doubted the ability of Negroes to fight in the air, must now admit that the exploits of the 99th Pursuit Squadron, the first Negro flying outfit, have more than proven that the Negroes capable of doing whatever task confronting him, and doing it with honor and distinction. 8-26-44

The Doubting-Thomases in the U. S. Army Air Force now also must admit that they were wrong and that Negroes are making a notable contribution in the Air Force. The Doubting-Thomases in the U. S. Army Air Force still insist that Negroes stay in separate units and separate squadrons. That satisfies their prejudice, even though they know that when once up in the air, Negro pilots and white pilots must, of sheer necessity, fight side by side and protect each other. There is no such thing as flak meant only for Negro-piloted planes. There is no such thing as flak meant only for white-piloted planes. An aeroplane is an aeroplane to the enemy and his bullets are just as deadly to a Negro pilot as to a white pilot. Likewise, the bullets fired by Negro pilots are just as deadly as the bullets fired by white pilots. 8-26-44

When once the high-ranking officials of the nation's armed services realize that all men and women wearing the uniforms of our country face the same hazards from the enemy, and meet the same fate, then, perhaps the barriers that separate the races will be removed. Until that time, we salute the Tuskegee Army Air Field, from the lowliest enlisted man to the highest officer, for having set a standard of excellence which has broken down another myth—that the Negro cannot fly efficiently. TAAF has shown it can be done. TAAF pilots are showing it by doing it. More power to them.

Venereal Disease Control School Has Many Students

Amsterdam News — New York, N.Y.

4-15-44

TUSKEGEE ARMY AIR FIELD, Ala.—Venereal disease has always been dreaded by the armed forces. During World War I 1,700,000 man days were lost because of the disease alone. In order that the same ordeal may not reoccur a school for training non-coms was opened at the Tuskegee Army Air Field to train soldiers throughout the country to make the individual conscious of this dreaded disease.

The school had its beginning in the early part of 1943, and the instructors used as their basis for training, education, recreation and suppression. The classes are orientated through modern textbooks, illustrative films and lectures of visiting health authorities, lecturing on the dangerous effects of venereal disease as well as diagnosis and treatment of the same.

The classes are composed of a cross section of men from practically every State in the country.

The school is under the supervision of Lieut. Col. George McDonald, venereal disease control officer at this station. 4-15-44

Members Taking Course

The men, now assigned to the Tuskegee Army Air Field to take up the V. D. course are: Tech. Sgt. Julian C. Guichard, of New Orleans, La., (R. A. A. B., Richmond, Va.); Staff Sgts. Walter E. Harris, of New York City, (M. A. A. B., Maxton, N. C.); Douglas E. Williams, of Middlesboro, Ky. (Grenier Field, N. H.); George E. Ayers, of Philadelphia, Pa.; Sgts. Claude Anderson, of Washington, D. C., (Langley Field, Va.); Walter Smith, Jr., of New Orleans, La., (Bradley Field, Conn.); Eugene P. Mance, of Canton, Ohio., (Camp Springs, D. C.); Charles F. Leftwich, of Washington, D. C., (Newark AAF, N. J.); George L. Starke, of New Rochelle, N. Y., (Westover Field, Mass.); Ernest R. Whitefi of Dayton, Ohio, (Lawson Field, Ga.); Galoway Ferguson, of Chicago, Ill., (Robin Field, Ga.); and Elvin C. Loatman, of Bridgeton, N. J., (Westover Field, Mass.); Cpls. Cyrus Seabrook, of New York City, (Orlando AB, Florida); Earl M. Lewis, of McComb, Miss., (Charleston AAF, S. C.); Willie Battle, of Greenville, Ala., (Orlando AB, Florida); Ernest E. DeBerry, of New York City, (Charleston AAF, S. C.); Edward A. White, of Steubenville, Ohio, (Bergstram Field, Texas; James C. Osborne, of Houston, Texas. (Robin Field, Ga.), Riley Jenkins, of New Orleans, La.; William O. Allen, of Philadelphia, Pa., (Brookley Field, Ala.); James A. Douglas, of New York City, (Richmond AAB, Va.); William A. Turner, of Jefferson City, Mo., (Cope Field, N. C.); John O. Davis, of Brooklyn, N. Y., (Mitchell Field, N. Y.); Charles E. Ballard, of Buffalo, N. Y., (Mitchell Field, N. Y.); Edwin D. Scopio, of Chadbourn, N. C., Elgin Field, Fla.); George Frazier, of Winchester, Ky., (Newark AAF, N. J.); Curtis Sessonms, of Washington, D. C., (Langley Field, Va.); Ivory G. Walton, of Chicago, Ill.; Wardell A. Salters, of Fort Meyers, Fla., (Robin Field, Ga.); and Warren R. Driver, of Trenton, N. J., (Elgin Field, Fla.), and Pfc. Ernest E. Morrison, of New Kensington, Pa., (Brookley Field, Alabama).

47a-1944 Tuskegee Army Air Field

ROCHESTER VISITS PATIENTS AT TUSKEGEE

Defender-Chicago, Ill. 1-8-44

Eager to spread joy and goodwill among the patients at the Tuskegee Army Air Field's Station hospital, Eddie "Rochester" Anderson, famous star of screen and radio is shown with Leon Rene, eniment composer, passing out autographs to convalescent patients.—Photo by AAF Training Command.

Rochester Makes Plane Visit To Tuskegee Field

Defender- Chicago, Ill.

1-8-44

TUSKEGEE, Ala.—Coming as a belated surprise Christmas gift to the men of this post, Eddie "Rochester" Anderson, noted movie star and laugh purveyer deluxe of Jack Benny's radio programs, paid a long-planned visit by plane to Tuskegee Army Air Field last Wednesday, when he was accompanied by Leon Rene, well known composer of hit tunes.

Following a chat with Col. Noel F. Parrish, commanding officer of this field, the visiting celebrities' tour included the post hospital, veteran's hospital, service club and officers club. Their visit was climaxed with a special program before a capacity audience of officers, cadets and enlisted men at the Post theatre. In his usual rare form, "Rochester" was a terrific hit with the men as he kept up a banter of comedy and song. He was enthusiastic in his praise of the progress of Tuskegee Army Air Field, and promised to encourage such Hollywood stars as Jack Benny and his gang and Lena Horne to visit here.

Mr. Rene played and sang some of his hit compositions, including "When the Swallows Come Back To Capistrano," "Someone's Rocking My Dream Boat," "Sleepytime Down South," and "I Lost My Sugar in Salt Lake City." He is also remembered for his score for the musical, "Lucky Day," and "Dusty Road," featured by Nelson Eddy in MGM's production, "Let Freedom Ring." A composer of special music for Ann Sothern and Bing Crosby, Mr. Rene's latest hit tune is "From Twilight 'til Dawn," and "Mexico Joe," both destined for the Hit Parade. On hearing TAAF's own "Imperial Wings of Rhythm," he shared "Rochester's" opinion that the orchestra had a terrific "beat" and could boast of soloists comparable if not better than those of professional orchestras. "Chehaw Special," an original tune of director Sgt. Claude Garvey of New York, they agreed that the song had possibilities of becoming a top swing number.

1-8-44

Satisfying a long desire to visit the men here, "Rochester's" trip to TAAF was actually the result of an invitation from S. Sgt. Anthony "Tony" Jones, well-known middleweight boxer stationed here, who was forr rly managed by the popular comedian.

Bombarded by a barrage of autograph seekers, the Hollywood pair had time to eat a hasty GI lunch at General Mess No. 2, before catching a plane for a performance at Gunter Field. Following his visit to Gunter, he boarded a plane in Montgomery winging coastward where he has a date with the cameras in early January.

ANOTHER CLASS GETS WINGS AT 'KEGEE

Afro-American Baltimore, Md. 1-1-44

PINNING ON THE WINGS of Lt. Joseph Whiten, newly commissioned Tuskegee Army Air Field pilot, is his bride, the former Miss Eleanor Gaines of Atlanta, Ga. They were married a few moments after the graduation ceremones were culminated. Lt. Whiten is a native of NYC.

HAPPY FOURSOME—On hand to watch their husbands get wings and commissions at the most recent Tuskegee Army Air Field graduation were Mrs. Virginia C. Daniels of Corona, N.Y., and Mrs. Doris F. Friend of Washington, D.C. Shown from left to right are Lt. and Mrs. Robert J. Friend, and Lt. and Mrs. Robert H. Daniels, Jr. Mrs. Friend is the former Miss Doris Goodwin of Baltimore, Md., while Mrs. Daniels is the former Miss Virginia Greene of Fitzhugh, Va.

WIFE AND MOTHER WITH PILOT—Taking time out during a busy graduation day to pose for this picture with his wife and mother is recently-commissioned flying officer, 2nd Lt. Reid E. Thompson, Jr., of 91 Potter Avenue, New Rochelle, N.Y. Pictured with the young flyer is his mother, Mrs. W. B. Thompson (left), and his wife, the former Miss Vivienne E. Brown of Newark, N.J.

'ROCHESTER' PAYS SURPRISE VISIT TO TUSKEGEE FIELD

Courier - Pittsburg, Pa.
1-8-44

TUSKEGEE ARMY AIR FIELD, Ala.—Coming as a belated surprise Christmas gift to the men of this post, Eddie "Rochester" Anderson, noted movie star and laugh purveyor deluxe of Jack Benny's radio programs, paid a long-planned visit by plane to Tuskegee Army Air field, Wednesday, December 29, when he was accompanied by Leon Rene, well-known composer of hit tunes.

Following a chat with Col. Noel F. Parrish, commanding officer of this field, the visiting celebrities' tour included the Post hospital, Veterans' hospital, Service club and Officers' club. Their visit was climaxed with a special program before a capacity audience of officers, cadets and enlisted men at the Post theatre. In his usual rare form, "Rochester" was a terrific hit with the men as he kept up a banter of comedy and song. He was enthusiastic in his praise of the progress of Tuskegee Army Air field, and promised to encourage such Hollywood stars as Jack Benny and his gang and Lena Horne to visit here. 1-8-44

Mr. Rene played and sang some of his hit compositions, including 'When the Swallows Come Back to Capistrano," "Someone's Rocking My Dream Boat," "Sleepytime Down South" and "I Lost My Sugar in Salt Lake City."

ew Phase Of udy Added At uskegee Field

Journal and Guide
Select Group Of Norfolk, Virginia
Trainees Pass
2-12-44
Rigid Test

TUSKEGEE ARMY AIR FIELD Ala.—The most recent phase of cadet training that has been instituted at the Tuskegee Army Air Field, is the addition of pre-flight bombardier classes.

Cadets are receiving the basic course before preparing to fulfill the bombardment group complement of Negro cadets now in navigation training at Hondo, Tex., and the bomber pilots who have completed their transitional B-25 training at Mather Field, Calif., and are awaiting their crews at Selfridge Field, Mich. 2-12-44

TUSKEGEE AIR FORCE

Tuskegee Army Air Field has long been the embryo of the nation's airminded Negro youth. This field has witnessed a steady rise in the number of cadets in training here. Originally set-up as a fighter pilot training center, such rapid progress was made in this phase that the facilities were expanded to include bomber pilot training and now pre-flight bombardier training.

These pre-flight bombardier students are a select group. All of them successfully passed the rigid classification tests at Keesler Field, Miss. Among their number is a group of former aviation cadets who failed to complete their training as fighter pilots.

These men are well versed in the fundamentals of ground work. Their short background and experiences as flying cadets should prove of inestimable value to their fellow classmates who as yet have little or no idea of the rigorous training that lies ahead in pre-flight ground school work. But even to these ex-cadets, this new type of training will hold some innovation. New studies have been added to conform to the duties they will eventually face as bombardiers. More emphasis is being placed on physics and math. To hit the target, one small error in calculation will cause a "miss." Co-ordination of mind and muscle is an absolute essential.

COMING UNHERALDED

When the pre-flight bombardiers first arrived at TAAF, few persons on the field knew of their coming until one afternoon the strains of an unfamiliar song was heard floating down from atop the hill where the Cadet Corps is quartered.

It was a stirring song full of the gusto and strength that typifies the men of the Army Air Forces. Finally the words clicked. It was the marching song of the bombardiers. They had arrived. Everyone was curious as to what they might look like. Swinging down avenue "A" they presented a picture of precision and discipline.

Their faces were eager. They seemed to know what was expected of them. They were the vanguard of the first Negroes that would some day jetty their bombs over enemy-occupied Europe. All eyes were upon them. Although still a long, long way from their "silver wings," these "dummies" somehow lent an impression of supreme confidence. They would make it. They would prove that their part in the all-Negro Bombardment Unit would be successful. They would do a good job of "breaking the ice" for future Negro bombardiers to come.

COMBAT PILOTS RETURN . . . GREETED BY ACTOR

Two fighter pilots, fresh from combat action in the Italian and Sicilian theatre of operations, were congratulated recently by a celebrated Dutch actor. The M-G-M star, Philip Dorn, arrived at the Tuskegee Army Air Field just in time to extend felicitations to the returning pilots, First Lt. Herbert V. Clark, of Pine Bluff, Ark., left and 2nd Lieut. Spann Watson, of Hackensack, N. J. 1-1-44 At right, Actor Dorn is shown in the centre.—AAF Training Command Photo.

47a-1944

Tuskegee Army Air Field

ROCHESTER IN SURPRISE VISIT TO TAAF

It is a long way to "Tipperary" . . . but "Rochester" is always eager to play his part in the bolstering of morale in the armed forces. Reading from left to right are: Chief nurse Della H. Raney, "Rochester," Lieut. Col. Richard C. Cumming, post surgeon, Station hospital, Tuskegee Army Air Field, and Leon Rene, composer, of Los Angeles, Calif.—(Photo by AAF Training Command).

ben Bilbo of San Francisco, also made the team.

Tuskegee team in AAU meet

Tribune-
Los Angeles, Calif.

RANDALL ISLAND, N. Y.—What is considered one of the strongest track and field teams in the Army Air Forces, Tuskegee Army Air Field was entered in the National AAU Track and Field meet here Saturday and Sunday.

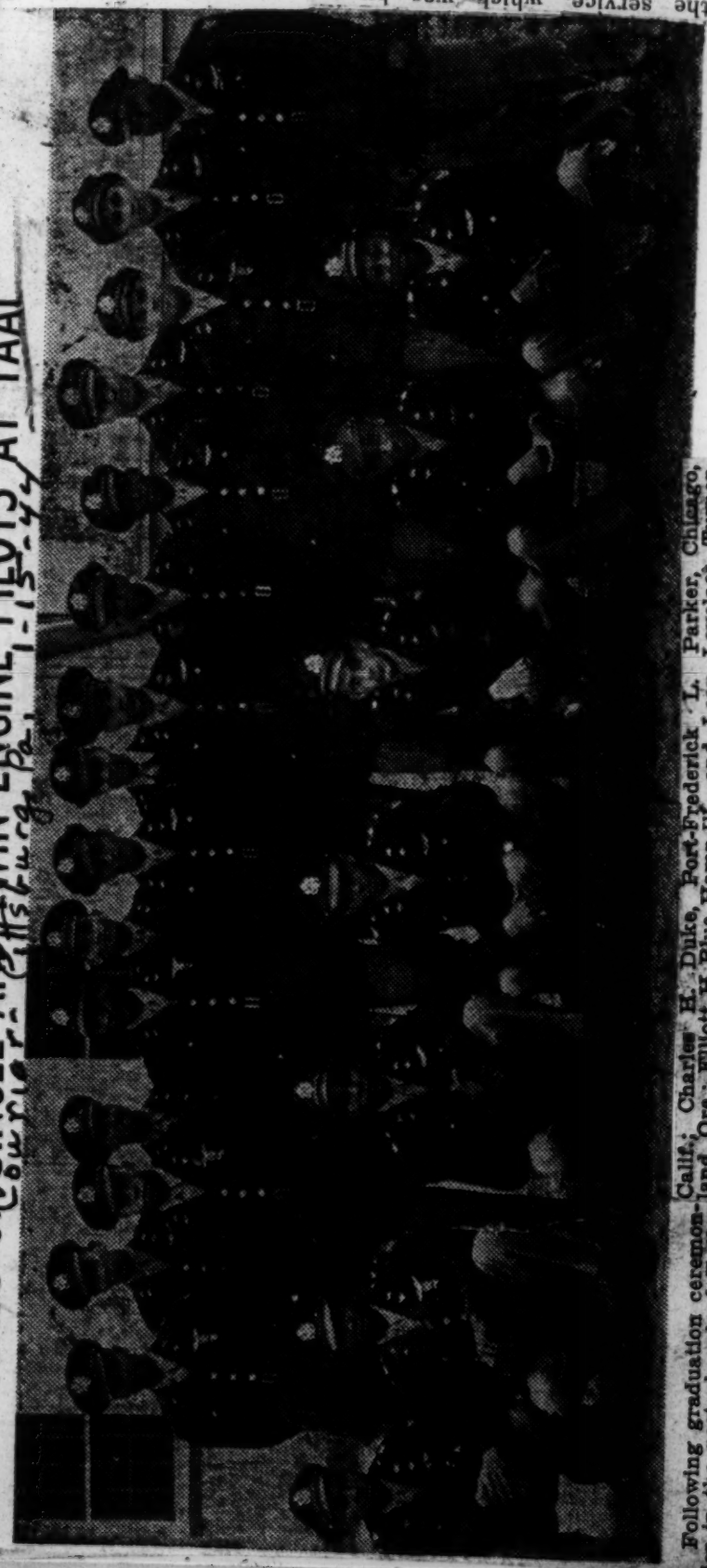
6-19-44

Included in the TAAF team of 23 members were:

John Brooks, former Olympic broad jump star of 1936; Archie Harris, U. S. record holder in the discus throw; and Zenas Butler, medalist in last year's AAU meet.

Butler's home is in Long Beach, Calif. Another Californian, Reu-

LATEST CLASS OF SINGLE AND TWIN ENGINE PILOTS AT TAAF



Following graduation ceremonies in the post chapel at Tuskegee Army Air Field, a large contingent of pilots received their wings and commissions in the ever-expanding Army Air Forces. Single and twin engine pilots kneeling, left to right, are: Second Lieuts. Robert L. Martin, Dubuque, Iowa; Robert O'Neil, Detroit, Mich.; Hubert Junius Bynum, Montclair, N. J.; Frank Williams, Los Angeles, Calif.; E. Roberts, Boston, Mass.; Flight Officer Clarence Williams, Fair-Samuel W. Harper, Oliver Springfield, Tenn.; Charles S. Jacobs, Ala.; Lieut. Andrea Prim-son, Jr., Chicago, Ill.; Charles E. Messiana, N. W. Washington, Walker, Jackson, Mich., and Ken-D. C. Flight Officer St. Matthew neth R. Hawkins, San Bernar-Twyman, Jr., Los Angeles, Calif.; dino, Calif. Lieuts. Virgil A. Daniels, Jack-Standing, first row, left to son, Va., and William A. right: Second Lieuts. Sanford Rucker, Washington, D. C. Maurice Perkins, Denver, Colo.; Now shown are Lieuts. Charles Clarence N. Driver, Los Angeles, Hunter, Washington, D. C.

1-15-44

Tuskegee Pilot Is Killed On Combat Training Mission

6-14-44

Daily World - Atlanta, Ga.

TUSKEGEE ARMY A I Rcombat training mission near (SNS) — Second Lt. Birmingham, Ala., on June 12, Kenneth Hayes of Los was killed while the Angeles, Calif., was flying a making cross country

The young pilot was flying a fighter aircraft at the time of the mishap. A board of qualified Army Air Force officers has been appointed to investigate and determine the exact cause of the accident.

Lieut. Hayes, a former student of the University of California, has a brother in the Armed Forces serving as a fighter pilot at the Waterboro Army Air Field, in South Carolina.

He is the son of Rev. and Mrs. George L. Hayes of Los Angeles and was a member of Alpha Phi Alpha. Prior to his enlistment in the service, which was by appointment as an aviation cadet, he was employed as a postal clerk in the terminal annex in Los Angeles before he went into the service.

43-41-9

47a-1944

Tuskegee Army Air Field

ROCHESTER IN SURPRISE VISIT TO TAAF

It is a long way to "Tipperary" . . . but "Rochester" is always eager to play his part in the bolstering of morale in the armed forces. Reading from left to right are: Chief nurse Della H. Raney, "Rochester," Lieut. Col. Richard C. Cumming, post surgeon, Station hospital, Tuskegee Army Air Field, and Leon Rene, composer, of Los Angeles, Calif.—(Photo by AAF Training Command).

ben Bilbo of San Francisco, also made the team.

Tuskegee team in AAU meet.

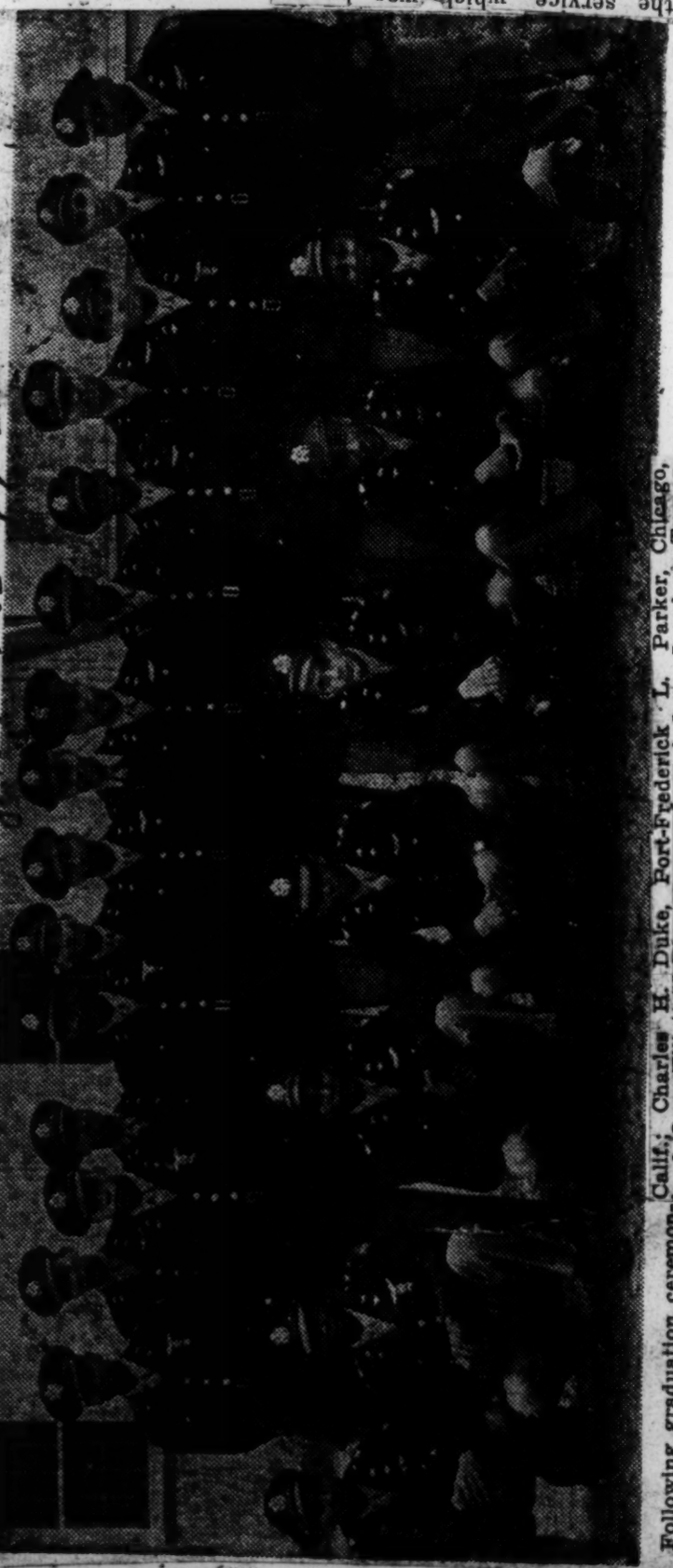
RANDALL ISLAND, N. Y.—What is considered one of the strongest track and field teams in the Army Air Forces, Tuskegee Army Air Field was entered in the National AAU Track and Field meet here Saturday and Sunday.

Included in the TAAF team of 23 members were:

John Brooks, former Olympic broad jump star of 1936; Archie Harris, U. S. record holder in the discus throw; and Zenas Butler, medalist in last year's AAU meet.

Butler's home is in Long Beach, Calif. Another Californian, Reu-

LATEST CLASS OF SINGLE AND TWIN ENGINE PILOTS AT TAAF



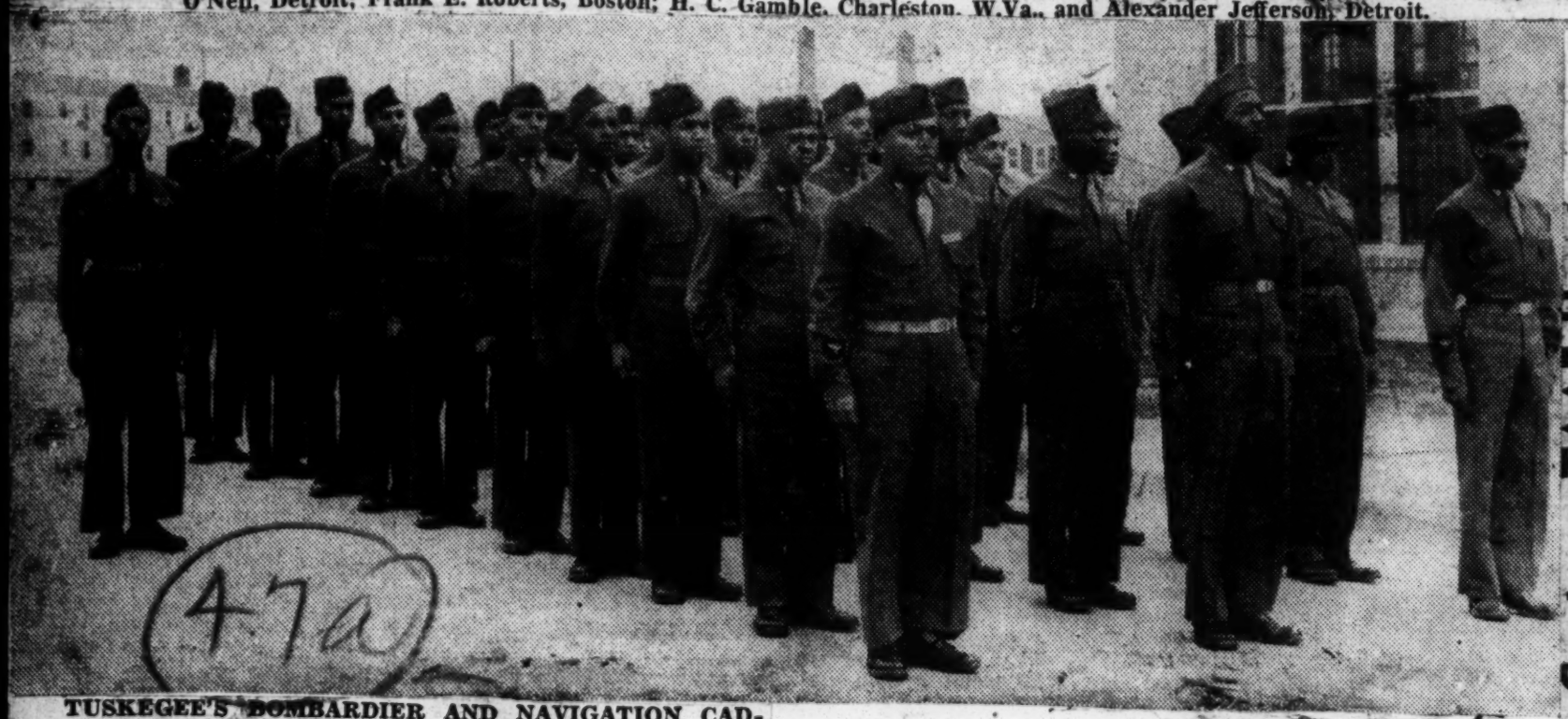
Following graduation ceremonies in the post chapel of Tuskegee Army Air Field, a large contingent of pilots received their wings and commissions in the ever-expanding Army Air Forces. Single and twin engine pilots kneeling, left to right, are: Second Lieuts. Robert L. Martin, Dubuque, Iowa; Robert O'Neil, Detroit, Mich.; Hilbert Williams, Los Angeles, Calif.; E. Roberts, Boston, Mass.; Flight Officer Clarence Williams, Fairfield, Ala.; Lieut. Andrea Primson, Jr., Chicago, Ill.; Charles E. Magdana, N. W. Washington, Walker, Jackson, Mich., and Kenneth R. Hawkins, San Bernardino, Calif. Standing, first row, left to right: Second Lieuts. Sanford Rucker, Washington, D. C.; George Parker, Chicago, Ill.; Elliott H. Blue, Hampton, Va.; Eugene Winslow, Chicago, Ill.; Alexander Jefferson, Detroit, Mich.; Arthur J. Williams, N. C., and Fred Lovelace Byrum, Montclair, N. J.; Frank E. Roberts, Boston, Mass.; Flight Officer Clarence Williams, Fairfield, Ala.; Lieut. Andrea Primstead, N. W. Washington, D. C.; Flight Officer St. Matthew Jr., Los Angeles, Calif.; Virgil A. Daniels, Jacksonville, Fla., and William A. Sanford Rucker, Washington, D. C. Not shown are Lieuts. Charles H. Duke, Fort-Frederick L. Calif.; Charles H. Duke, Fort-Frederick L. Parker, Chicago, land, Ore.; Elliott H. Blue, Hamp-ill., and Leon Lovelace ton, Va.; Eugene Winslow, Chi-N.W. Washington, cago, Ill.; Alexander Jefferson, officers, having tingent of pilots received their wings and commissions in other b ever-expanding Army Air Forces. Single and twin engine pilots only received their kneeling, left to right, are: Second Lts. R. Augustus burn, Asheville, N. C., and Fred D. McIver, Jr., Philadelphia, Pa. Standing, second row, left to Lts. R. Augustus Bynum, Montclair, N. J.; Frank Calif.; E. Roberts, Boston, Mass.; Flight Officer Clarence Williams, Fairfield, Ala.; Lieut. Andrea Primstead, N. W. Washington, D. C.; Flight Officer St. Matthew Jr., Los Angeles, Calif.; Virgil A. Daniels, Jacksonville, Fla., and William A. Sanford Rucker, Washington, D. C. Not shown are Lieuts. Charles H. Duke, Fort-Frederick L. Parker, Chicago,

More Fighter Pilots Finish Tuskegee Training

Latest contingent of fighter pilots to complete their transitional training at the Tuskegee Army Air Field. Shown, left to right, are: 2nd Lt. Arthur J. Wilburn, Asheville, N.C.; Flight Officer Clarence N. Driver, Los Angeles, Calif.; 2nd Lts. Sanford M. Perkins, Denver, Col. Charles S. Jackson, Chicago; Robert L. Martin, Dubuque, Iowa; Robert Frederick D. McIver, Philadelphia; Charles H. Duke, Portland, Ore.; O'Neil, Detroit; Frank E. Roberts, Boston; H. C. Gamble, Charleston, W.Va., and Alexander Jefferson, Detroit.

TUSKEGEE ARMY AIR FIELD, Ala.—When the lovely, lovable Lena Horne stepped down to the flying line at the Tuskegee Army Air Field it was the signal for most of the mechanics, engineers, crew chiefs and laborers to put a halt to whatever they were doing and escort the beauteous Lena about the place. Lena could hardly get in a question of her own, so curious were the men to know all about the comely star. She took it all in fun and seemed to be having the time of her life. It's a cinch that her short stay here endeared her in the hearts of all that she came into contact with. In the words of the men she talked and posed for pictures with, "She sure is one regular girl."

(AAFTC Photo)



TUSKEGEE'S BOMBARDIER AND NAVIGATION CADETS—Tuskegee's bombardier and navigation cadets stand stiffly at attention before falling out for classroom duties. These members of future Army Air Forces bomber crews are now undergoing their pre-flight training at the Tuskegee Army Air Field of the Army Air Forces Training Command. (Photo by AAF Training Command).

Lena Horne Captures TAAF Hearts